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Holiday



GERALD HERBERT/AP

Obama released his report on the Illinois scandal.

All Clear: Obama finds no illegal talks with Blagojevich | **3**

Investor Suicide: Madoff victim found dead at work | **4**

\$180M Man: Teixeira lands a huge deal with Yankees | **13**

WeekendPass



Boys Will Be Boys: The Slickee Boys may get together only once a year, but these local rockers still rule. >> **INSIDE**



CARRIED TO SAFETY: A rescue worker on Tuesday pulls a stranded driver out of the water in Bethesda, Md. A major water break created chaos for motorists.

Drivers Pulled From Deluge

Massive water main break traps motorists on Bethesda road

BETHESDA, MD. | A massive, aging water main ruptured Tuesday, transforming a suburban Washington road into a raging river and trapping nine motorists who had to be rescued from the frigid deluge by emergency workers in helicopters and boats.

The water gushed down River Road and rocked cars. Two people in a minivan were plucked by helicopter out of the roaring rapids, water crashing and spraying around them as they were lifted to safety in a basket. Other motorists escaped 4-feet deep

water by boat.

Montgomery County fire officials said five people were checked for hypothermia; temperatures outside were in the 20s.

"The water tumbled over the car like a wave," said Silvia Saldana, of Springfield, Va., who was traveling to work when she became trapped. "I started to pray."

Fire spokesman Pete Piringer said crews had trouble getting to people because of the

swift-moving water. Officials said 150,000 gallons of water per minute were rushing out at one point, spilling rocks and other debris onto the road.

Trees fell onto a power line and knocked down a utility pole. Schools in the county closed early because of widespread water outages, and a hospital where three people rescued were treated and released diverted ambulances and closed its trauma division because of lost water pressure.

GILLIAN GAYNAR (AP)

♦ **'I don't want to die here':** Tuesday's water main break was a fight for survival for stranded drivers | Page 9



DO YOU EXPECT TO HAVE A BETTER OR WORSE YEAR
IN 2009 THAN YOU HAD IN 2008? **A** BETTER **B** WORSE

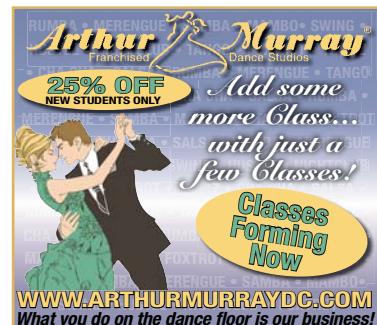
TO CAST YOUR VOTE, VISIT EXPRESSNIGHTOUT.COM OR TEXT **A** FOR 'YES' OR **B** FOR 'NO' TO 98999. FOR WEDNESDAY'S POLL RESULTS, SEE PAGE 24

WEDNESDAY
52°43'

THURSDAY
51°30'

FRIDAY
43°37'

TODAY: Mostly cloudy, rainy and breezy, but dramatically warmer | **26**



eyeOpeners

EMERGENCIES

Sometimes You Just Really Need Your Mom

Police in South Salt Lake, Utah, have arrested a 25-year-old man they say tried to steal a fire truck so he could drive home to see his mother — in Washington — for Christmas. Detective Gary Keller says firefighters on a medical call heard the \$500,000 truck's air horn blaring Monday and ran outside. They found a man in the driver's seat trying to drive away. Following a lengthy struggle, firefighters were finally able to subdue the man until police arrived on the scene. "Someone in a fire truck, whatever the reason, driving down the street erratically, it could have been very dangerous, very hazardous," Keller told KSL-TV. (AP)



BAD IDEAS

Burn, Baby, B — Oops

Fire officials in New Bedford, Mass., say a man using a blowtorch to melt ice on his back porch ended up setting his house on fire, causing up to \$30,000 in damage. Fire Capt. Scott Kruger tells The Standard-Times of New Bedford that no one was injured during Monday's incident at the three-story home. Kruger says the man was using a torch hooked up to a 20-pound propane cylinder. He got too close to the building's wood frame and ignited the vinyl siding. The fire quickly spread into the building's second- and third-floor apartments. It took 25 firefighters to subdue the blaze, which damaged bedrooms in the upstairs units and caused damage to the structure and wiring. The homeowner will not be charged. (AP)



ANIMALS

What, Socks Again?

Being a zoo animal can be boring, with days spent just trudging around and looking at tourists. But Tuesday brought a little excitement for the animals at Australia's Taronga Zoo, in the form of food-filled presents placed inside the animals' enclosures. Zookeepers say the exercise wasn't just holiday fun — it was also part of a behavioral program that encourages animals to use their natural instincts to forage for food. (EXPRESS)

MIRACLES

Diamonds and Dust

The American Museum of Natural History's latest discovery is a diamond in the rough: a visitor's \$15,000 gem in a

vacuum-cleaner bag. The one-carat stone fell out of Catherine Hart's ring during a "Night at the Museum" sleepover event at the storied New York institution Dec. 13 and 14. Custodial supervisor Herbert Andujar says

staffers in gloves and masks combed through the dust in four vacuum bags, scrutinizing everything that glittered, before finding the gem. Hart says it shows a diamond really is forever, "because it came back to me." (AP)

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NO-WIN SITUATION: Four co-workers in Troy, Ohio, filed a lawsuit Tuesday against the winners of a \$207 million lottery jackpot, saying the others didn't keep a promise to share the winnings. The four said they were regulars in the office pool but were out of the office when the ticket was bought.

Nation

President Hands Out 19 Pardons

Posthumous pardon is granted to man who shipped arms to Israel

WASHINGTON | President Bush today commuted a prison sentence and granted 19 new pardons, including an unusual posthumous pardon for a man who helped ship arms and aircraft to the Jewish resistance in the Middle East prior to the founding of Israel.

Bush has only granted 190 pardons and nine commutations so far, less than half the number granted by Bill Clinton and Ronald Reagan.

Bush's latest list includes a pardon for the late Charles Winters, who was convicted of violating the Neutrality Act and served 18 months in prison for helping supply arms to Jews attempting to found a state in the Middle East in the 1940s.

The list does not include high-profile names, such as former vice presidential aide I. Lewis "Scooter" Libby, that have been the focus of speculation as pardon candidates.

DAN EGGEN (THE WASHINGTON POST)



HOLIDAY SCHEDULE: Express will not publish on Thursday or Friday in observance of the Christmas holiday. Publishing will resume on Dec. 29.

Report Clears Emanuel in Ill. Scandal

Review: Obama aide's talks with Blagojevich were not inappropriate

WASHINGTON | President-elect Barack Obama and two of his top aides met last week with federal investigators building a corruption case against Illinois Gov. Rod Blagojevich, who is accused of trying to swap Obama's Senate seat for cash or a lucrative job.

The interviews with Obama, along with incoming chief of staff Rahm Emanuel and adviser Val-



Emanuel

Jarrett

erie Jarrett, were disclosed Tuesday in an internal report produced for Obama on contacts with Blagojevich. Obama delayed releasing his report until those interviews were completed with U.S. Attorney Patrick Fitzgerald's staff, incoming

White House attorney Greg Craig said in the review.

Obama had no contact with the governor or his aides, the report states. Prosecutors have said Obama is not implicated in the case.

Emanuel was the only Obama transition team member who discussed the Senate appointment with Blagojevich, and those conversations were "totally appropriate and acceptable," Craig said Tuesday. No one on Obama's transition team discussed any deals or had any knowledge of deals, Craig's report said.

Sources have said Emanuel is not a target in the case. The report said Obama authorized Emanuel to pass on the names of four people he considered to be highly qualified to take over his seat — Illinois Comptroller Dan Hynes, Illinois Veterans' Affairs Director Tammy Duckworth, Rep. Jan Schakowsky and Rep. Jesse Jackson Jr.

The report said that earlier, Emanuel recommended Jarrett for the Senate seat without Obama's knowledge, and Jarrett later accepted a job as a senior White House adviser. NEDRA PICKLER (AP)

ANCHORAGE, ALASKA | FROSTY'S NIGHTMARE



MARC LESTER/AP

PILED HIGH: Michael Brasch photographs a giant snowman Tuesday in Anchorage. The snowman, known as "Snowzilla" to many, was completed this week despite city orders that declared the 25-foot snowman a public nuisance.

Housing Market Shows No Signs Of Turnaround

WASHINGTON | U.S. home sales in 2008 are expected to be the worst in a decade, November data confirmed Tuesday, and there appears to be no quick turnaround coming next year.

Existing home sales plunged to a rate of 4.49 million last month, down 8.6 percent from October, and worse than economists predicted. Total sales, not calculated as an annual rate, fell 17 percent in November from a year earlier to 322,000, the National Association of Realtors said. The median sales price tumbled 13 percent to \$181,300, the largest decline since record-keeping began 40 years ago. (AP)

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Nation



"President-elect Obama and I are absolutely, absolutely determined that this economic recovery plan will not become a Christmas tree."

—Vice President-elect Joe Biden, vowing to keep earmarks out of a planned economic stimulus bill

Madoff Investor Kills Self

Man found dead at his desk after fund he managed lost \$1.4B

NEW YORK | The founder of an investment fund that lost \$1.4 billion with Bernard Madoff was discovered dead Tuesday after committing suicide at his Madison Avenue office, marking a grim turn in a scandal that has left investors around the world in financial ruin.

Rene-Thierry Magon de la Villehuchet was found sitting at his desk at about 8 a.m. with both wrists slashed, New York Police Department spokesman Paul Browne said. A box cutter was found on the floor along with a bottle of sleeping pills on his desk. No suicide note was found.

De la Villehuchet was one of several fund managers to be hit hard in Madoff's alleged \$50 billion Ponzi scheme. Investment funds that lost big to Madoff are also facing backlash and investor lawsuits for not protecting their clients.



People exit the N.Y. tower where Rene-Thierry de la Villehuchet killed himself.

It is not immediately known what kind of scrutiny de la Villehuchet was facing over his Madoff losses through his Access International Advisors, located a couple of blocks from Rockefeller Center.

But on Monday night, he told cleaning crews in his building that he wanted them out of his office by 7 p.m. because he was going to be working late.

Workers returned Tuesday morning and found the door locked. He was discovered dead at his desk with a garbage can placed near his body to apparently catch the blood, Browne said.

De la Villehuchet was a prominent investor who came from a long line of aristocratic Frenchmen, with the Magon part of his name referring to one of France's most powerful families.

His fund enlisted intermediaries with links to the cream of Europe's high society to garner clients. Among them was Philippe Junot, a French businessman and friend who is the former husband of Princess Caroline of Monaco.

De la Villehuchet lived in an affluent suburb in Westchester County with his wife. There was no answer Tuesday at the family's two-story house.

"He's irreproachable," said Bill Rapavy, who was Access International's chief operating officer before founding his own firm in 2007.

ADAM GOLDMAN AND TOM HAYS (AP)

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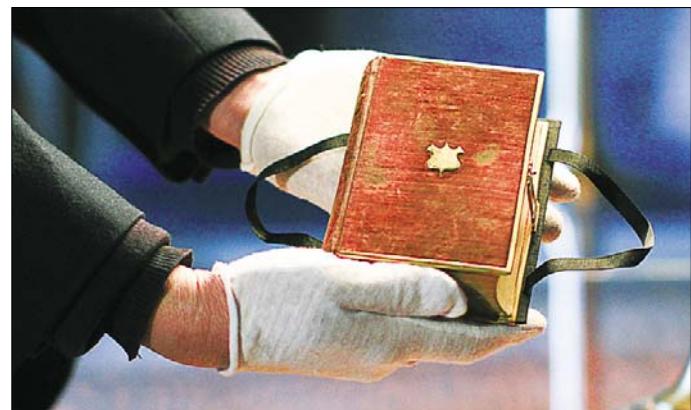


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WASHINGTON | TOUCH OF ABE



LAUREN VICTORIA BURKE/AP

SECOND OATH: Curator Clark Evans displays the gilt-edged Lincoln Inaugural Bible Tuesday at the Library of Congress. President-elect Barack Obama will take his oath of office on the Bible on Jan. 20, becoming the first president to use it since Abraham Lincoln at his swearing-in on March 4, 1861.

ACLU Challenges Laguna Beach Law

LAGUNA BEACH, CALIF. | The American Civil Liberties Union has filed a federal civil rights lawsuit against the ritzy Southern California city of Laguna Beach over its treatment of the homeless.

The lawsuit addresses an ordinance that criminalizes sleeping on

the street, which ACLU attorneys say is unconstitutional.

The town nestled on bluffs above coves and tide pools is famous for art galleries and luxury hilltop homes with Pacific vistas. It is the setting of MTV's hit reality show "Laguna Beach." (AP)

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World

10

The amount, in tons, of chocolate bonbons seized by French customs officials in November that were found to be harmless but low-quality copies of Ferrero Rocher chocolates, officials reported Tuesday. The counterfeit candies will be destroyed.

Group Declares a Coup in Guinea

Death of country's dictator prompts chaos over future leadership

CONAKRY, GUINEA | A military group seized control of the airwaves in mineral-rich Guinea and declared a coup Tuesday after the death of the West African country's dictator, one of the continent's last strongmen.

The turmoil raises the prospect of violence flaring in a region where neighbors Sierra Leone, Ivory Coast and Liberia all have been devastated by years of war.

A group calling itself the National Council for Democracy began announcing its takeover on state-run radio and TV just hours after the death of longtime dictator Lansana Conte was made public.

"The government is dissolved. The institutions of the republic are dissolved. ... From this moment on, the council is taking charge of the destiny of the Guinean people," said the group's spokesman, who identified himself as Capt. Moussa Camara.

Camara said presidential elections would be held within 60 days, but that an interim president and prime minister would be appointed.



→ **Population:** 9,806,509
→ **Capital City:** Conakry
→ **Area:** 245,857 sq. km.
→ **Languages:** French (official), ethnic languages
→ **Life expectancy:** 58 (f); 55 (m)
→ **Literacy:** 18% (f); 43% (m)
→ **Religion:** Muslim 85%, Christian 8%, Indigenous beliefs 7%
(CIA FACTBOOK)

Coup leaders met Tuesday evening to decide which of them will head the interim government, according to Aboubacar Sompore, president of the National Assembly. Later, Camara announced a 30-member interim government on state-run TV — including 29 military leaders and one civilian.

Dozens of armed soldiers were seen heading toward the prime minister's office on Tuesday.

They appeared less than an hour after Prime Minister Ahmed Tidiane Souare announced in a state broadcast that his government had not been dissolved. (AP)



Iraqi Parliament speaker Mahmoud al-Mashhadani, center, resigned Tuesday.

Iraq OKs Foreign Troop Deal

Parliament speaker resigns during group's final session of 2008

BAGHDAD | Iraq's fractious parliament squeezed its abrasive speaker out of a job and authorized non-U.S. troops to stay for another half-year on Tuesday, in a pair of high-stakes moves in its final session of the year.

Under heavy pressure from Shiite and Kurdish lawmaker, Sunni speaker Mahmoud al-Mashhadani resigned on the losing end of a long-running power struggle. Lawmakers applauded his announcement, quickly approved it, then passed a measure allowing Britain's 4,000 troops and several smaller contingents from other countries to stay through July.

"I do believe that I was faithfully doing good work," al-Mashhadani said in his address to the chamber where he often offended other lawmakers. "If I caused hurt to you, I ask your forgiveness."

Al-Mashhadani has clashed repeatedly with Kurdish and Shiite lawmakers in recent years. The enmity reached its peak last week in a shouting match over the detention of the journalist who threw his shoes at President Bush.

Within a half-hour of his resignation, parliament approved the troops measure in a voice vote — just a week before the U.N. mandate authorizing foreign troops was to expire. QASSIM ABDUL-ZAHRA (AP)

Chinese Court Dismisses Quake Suit by Parents

BEIJING | A Chinese court has dismissed a lawsuit filed by parents of 58 children crushed to death when their school collapsed during May's massive earthquake, the latest setback for the parents in their quest for an apology and compensation.

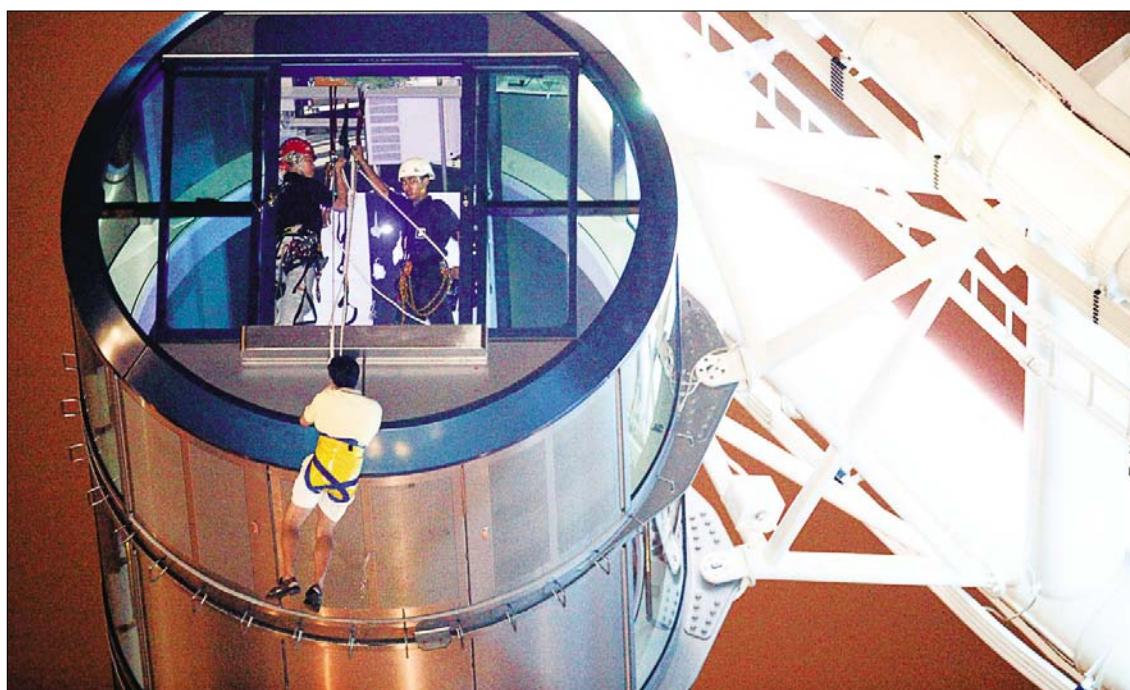
The dismissal of the case and reports of threats made against the parents underscore the political sensitivity of allegations that corruption and substandard construction caused thousands of classrooms to collapse in the 7.9 magnitude quake.

While the government has promised an investigation and strict punishment for bad construction, there has been no public attempt so far to hold anyone accountable. (AP)

HEARSAY | DENIAL

"We are not going to listen to what [President] Bush and [British PM] Gordon Brown are saying. ... These are the last kicks of a dying horse."

— ROBERT MUGABE, ZIMBABWEAN PRESIDENT, REACTING TO U.S. AND BRITISH CALLS FOR HIM TO STEP DOWN, ON TUESDAY.



Rescuers evacuate a passenger from the Singapore Flyer using a harness on Tuesday. The Ferris wheel is the world's largest.

173 Rescued From Ride in Singapore

Passengers trapped for 6 hours in world's largest Ferris wheel

SINGAPORE | Fire broke out in the control room of the world's largest Ferris wheel Tuesday, trapping 173 people hundreds of feet above the ground for hours and forcing rescuers to lower 10 passengers to safety by rope.

Two passengers were hospitalized with minor ailments.

During the six hour-ordeal, passengers were able to talk with officials via intercom and rescuers tethered to harnesses brought them sandwiches and soft drinks, said general manager Steven Yeo.

The 541-foot Flyer, which has carried 2 million passengers so far, is about 100 feet taller than the London Eye, formerly the world's tallest Ferris wheel.

Technicians were able to get the wheel moving again six hours after it stopped, and most of the passen-

gers exited normally, Yeo said.

The wheel, known as the Singapore Flyer, has stalled twice since it began operating in February. "This is the first time that something of this nature has happened, where people were hospitalized," Yeo said.

The 10 passengers closest to the ground were evacuated by harnesses, and rescuers had planned to evacuate the other passengers the same way when the wheel's power was restored, Civil Defense Colonel N. Subhas said. ALEX KENNEDY (AP)



GOOD HEAVENS: Galileo Galilei is going from heretic to hero. The Vatican is recasting the most famous victim of its Inquisition as a man of faith, just in time for the 400th anniversary of Galileo's telescope and the U.N.-designated International Year of Astronomy next year. Pope Benedict XVI paid tribute to the Italian astronomer on Sunday.

World

Putin: No More Cheap Gas

14 exporting nations lay the groundwork for closer cooperation

MOSCOW | The price of natural gas is set to rise as the world financial crisis and rising costs hurt production, Russian Prime Minister Vladimir Putin said Tuesday as he presided over a forum of gas-exporting nations laying the groundwork for closer cooperation.

Energy ministers from 14 gas-rich countries signed an agreement to set up the Gas Exporting Countries Forum headquartered in Doha, Qatar.

The body has been meeting since 2001, but until now it had no formal membership or management. Putin said the organization will work "perfectly in line with inter-



Russian Prime Minister Vladimir Putin speaks at meeting in Moscow Tuesday.

national norms."

He predicted the financial crisis will hit the gas industry harder than other energy sectors, because the gas market is more sluggish.

"We can expect the crisis to have a bigger effect on it than on oil busi-

ness," Putin said. "Costs of exploration, gas production and transportation are going up — it means the industry's development costs will skyrocket. The time of cheap energy resources [and] cheap gas is surely coming to an end."

Analysts expect prices to drop in the short term — through the spring — as lower global demand hurts prices. In the long term, however, experts fear the financial downturn may starve the industry of the funds it needs to keep up production.

Earlier in the day, Deputy Prime Minister Igor Sechin brushed off suggestions that Russia would dominate the gas exporters' body.

"All member countries have equal powers," Sechin was quoted as saying by the ITAR-Tass news agency. "It would be wrong to say who would be the leader." NATALIYA VASILYeva (AP)

CHINA | GIANT DELIVERY



FOND FAREWELL: Dancers perform in front of a poster of giant pandas at an airport in Chengdu, China, on Tuesday, during a farewell ceremony for two pandas that were delivered to Taipei, Taiwan, in a gesture of goodwill.

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Happy Holidays!



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DRILL BIT: Virginia Gov. Tim Kaine is asking the U.S. Department of the Interior for more time before leasing waters off Virginia's coast for oil and gas drilling. In a letter, Kaine asked that preparation for the lease sale be delayed to provide time for gathering environmental data.

Local



BILL OLEARY/WP

ROUGH ROAD: Left, water rushing down River Road eroded soil holding a tree in place. When it toppled, it took down utility lines. Right, cars battle the floodwaters.

Md. Workers Save Stranded Drivers

Emergency crews use helicopters, boats to rescue stuck motorists

Marcia Espinola was driving to her housecleaning job in Montgomery County Tuesday morning, the road beneath her as dry as the 16-degree air outside. Suddenly, a wall of water rushed toward her and crashed over the roof of her SUV. She was trapped inside.

Espinola thought about trying to wade through the water but feared it would sweep her away. She doesn't know how to swim. "I don't want to die here," the 59-year-old grandmother prayed.

She wrote her husband's phone number on a piece of paper and held it to the window, hoping someone would see it. Ice formed on her windshield and side-mirror. More



U.S. Park Police use a helicopter yesterday as part of rescue operations in Bethesda.

than an hour after her ordeal began, a rescue worker arrived on a boat and helped her climb aboard.

Espinola and eight others were plucked from vehicles Tuesday after a 66-inch water main burst on the side of River Road just outside the

Capital Beltway in Bethesda. Two were saved by boats. Three climbed into a basket lowered 120 feet by a helicopter. Four were taken away by rescue workers who were able to get close in large trucks.

The massive underground pipe

rupture blocked a major commuter artery, shut down Montgomery schools and brought renewed scrutiny to the main water service utility in Montgomery and Prince George's County, which has seen a series of bursting pipes to its aging network in recent years.

The pipe burst along a hilly section of River Road, turning the downhill section into a literal river. Montgomery Rescue workers, trained to save people from the Potomac River, said at large rocks carried by the waters made the situation especially dangerous.

"All were in a dire situation," said Sgt. Nathan Wheelock, a paramedic aboard a Maryland State Police helicopter who lowered a rescue basket through a narrow opening between trees and power lines to two of the cars. DAN MORSE AND KATHERINE SHAVER (THE WASHINGTON POST)

Md. Sues Army Over Pollution

ANNAPOLIS, MD. | Maryland filed a federal lawsuit against the U.S. Army on Tuesday for failing to act on a federal order to clean up pollution at Fort Meade.

The Army has been working with the Environmental Protection Agency and Maryland environmental officials for years to address pollution at the Army base, but Maryland officials contend the Army is taking too long to comply.

Last year, the EPA ordered the Army to take immediate action to clean up the site after the agency found the pollution to be a threat to public health.

"The Army has failed to comply and EPA has not commenced an enforcement action against its fellow agency," according to the complaint filed in U.S. District Court in Baltimore.

Maryland Attorney General Doug Gansler said in a statement that the Army was "heading in the right direction by expressing willingness to comply with the EPA order."

"But the Army must agree to a legally binding commitment that clearly details a timeline for cleanup and immediate action to protect public health," Gansler said.

The court filing in U.S. District Court in Baltimore was made after the state filed a notice of intent to sue in August, if the Army failed to commit to specific actions and a timeline for cleanup within 90 days. BRIAN WITTE (AP)

The Lotteries

Thursday, Dec. 23

DISTRICT

Mid-day Lucky Numbers	2-6-7
Evening Lucky Numbers (Wed.)	0-7-2
Mid-day DC 4	9-2-4-3
Evening DC 4 (Wed.)	9-0-9-8
Rolling Cash Five (Wed.)	2-18-19-29-31
Daily 6 (Wed.)	4-13-15-17-28-37 Bonus: 38
Hot Lotto (Wed.)	2-7-10-15-24 (6)

MARYLAND

Mid-day Pick 3	0-7-7
Evening Pick 3 (Wed.)	0-2-4
Mid-day Pick 4	1-0-9-9
Evening Pick 4 (Wed.)	5-2-7-8
Match 5 (Wed.)	8-12-17-28-36 Bonus: 37
Lotto (Wed.)	3-4-6-18-26-39

VIRGINIA

Mid-day Pick 3 (Thurs.)	0-4-6
Evening Pick 3 (Wed.)	9-5-2
Mid-day Pick 4 (Thurs.)	8-8-1-5

MULTI-STATE GAMES

Powerball (Wed.)	3-14-19-32-54 (24)
Power Play	5X

All winning numbers are official only when validated at a lottery ticket location or a lottery claims office. Drawings that occur after Express's deadline will be published two days later.

Condom Found in Chuck E. Cheese's

BEL AIR, MD. | The Harford County Health Department says a condom found at a Chuck E. Cheese's restaurant in Bel Air did not pose a safety threat.

Department spokesman Bill Wiseman says the agency received a call from parents Monday and inspectors went to the restaurant to investigate. Wiseman says it appears

the condom had not been used.

Roni Tilton says her husband spotted their 4-year-old son playing with the condom Sunday as the child crawled through a maze of plastic tubes.

Company spokeswoman Brenda Holloway says employees followed the appropriate guidelines for dealing with such incidents. (AP)

Travel

20

The percentage by which hostel bookings by North Americans increased in 2008 on Hostelworld.com, the Web site reported. Hostelworld.com said the increase was likely due to the economy, as well as the upscaling of hostels.

Alaska's Bright Winter Nights

Head to the Northwest for the chance to spot vibrant aurora borealis

DESTINATIONS | Last winter, my 10-year-old son and I headed to a destination that had friends and family wondering if we'd lost our minds. We went to Fairbanks. In February.

We hoped to see the Northern Lights, though we knew there were no guarantees. If you stay three nights in the area, locals say you have a 75 percent likelihood of wit-



BOB MARTINSON/AP

Aurora borealis lights up the sky near Palmer, Alaska, in February. Only 250,000 tourists visit Alaska in the winter, but those visitors often see the Northern Lights.

nessing the phenomenon, but cloud cover or snow falling can ruin your chances. We got lucky, and saw them twice on a three-night stay.

But while we went to see the aurora borealis, we ended up doing so much more. In Fairbanks, we visited an ice park, saw ice sculptures and toured the Museum of the North. At Chena Hot Springs Resort, about 60 miles from Fairbanks, we went dogsledding and snowmobiling, soaked in an outdoor hot tub surrounded by snow, and visited an ice museum and geothermal energy plant.

Only about 250,000 tourists venture to Alaska between October and April —compared to about 1.7 million summer visitors.

Besides our outdoor excursions, we experienced an unexpected cultural immersion. Charter flights from Tokyo bring thousands of Japanese visitors to Alaska each winter. Seeing the Northern Lights is "on their life list," explained Chena spokeswoman Denise Ferree.

Watching these Japanese visitors waiting outside in the snow for a once-in-a-lifetime chance to see the aurora borealis was inspiring. Like a lot of Americans, patience is not my strong suit. But my son and I shared the Japanese tourists' exclamations of joy when we spotted the Northern Lights. BETH J. HARPAZ (AP)

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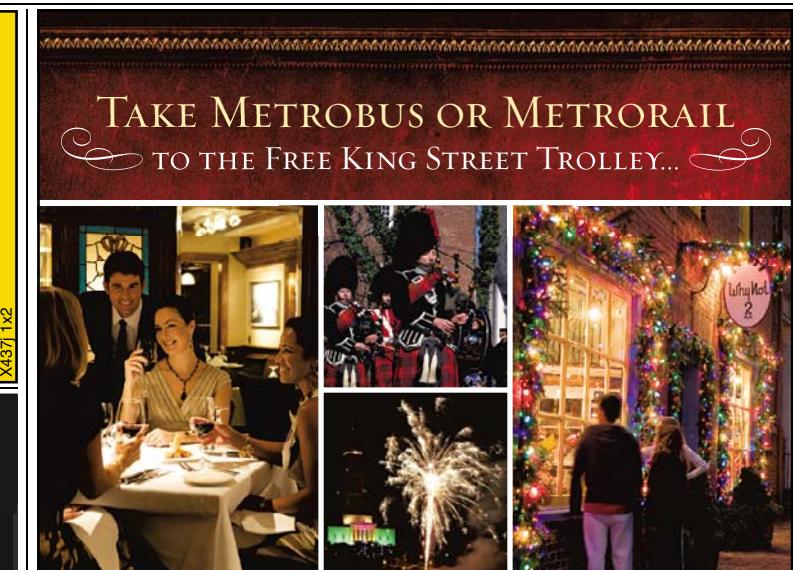
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Chef Cathal Armstrong, Restaurant Eve

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THE PRICE IS WRONG: Some customers calling Fisher-Price's consumer-relations line are getting an invitation for relations of a different sort. The toymaker apologized Tuesday for including an incorrect telephone number on a DVD sleeve that dials up an adults-only hotline.

Money

American Express Awarded Bailout

NEW YORK | American Express Co. said Tuesday it received preliminary approval to obtain \$3.39 billion in capital as part of the government's \$700 billion bank investment program. Primarily a credit card lender, American Express changed its structure to become a bank holding company last month. The change in status allows American Express to tap a wide array of government funding and lending programs, including the bank investment program. (AP)

HEARSAY | CLOSURE

"We could have accomplished more if we had another product. ... You never know when a rainy day is going to happen. This is a rainy day."

— MARK KRUG, GENERAL MOTORS EMPLOYEE, AFTER HIS FINAL SHIFT AT AN SUV PLANT IN MORaine, OHIO, THAT CLOSED ON TUESDAY.

Checked Bag Fees Are Here to Stay

Airlines are sticking with luggage charges despite lower fuel costs

ATLANTA | When airlines started charging some passengers \$15 or more earlier this year to check their bags, they blamed soaring fuel costs. Since then, oil has plummeted. Yet the industry hasn't stowed away the bag fees.

Many of us are still paying to fly with a suitcase that doesn't squeeze into the overhead bin or under the seat.

The reason is simple: Airlines are still losing money, though now largely because of the recession instead of oil.

And don't expect the fee to disappear even when the economy rebounds. Airlines are finding the fees to be a reliable source of revenue and say that such charges allow passengers to choose only the services they want.

Passengers, meanwhile, are paying up and grumbling. Many



A United Airlines employee checks in a bag for a passenger at the Miami International Airport June 12. Most American airlines now charge fees for checked bags.

are being socked, on average, \$15 for the first bag and \$25 for the second.

"I think it's unfair and I think it's highway robbery," said Benjamin Johnson, a 38-year-old govern-

ment employee, as he headed from Atlanta to Orlando, Fla.

For the airlines, the bag fees, on top of charges for other once-free amenities, add up to much-needed revenue. Airlines say they are being

hurt by the recession, which has caused demand for seats to drop.

Airlines say the fees are a new

For the airlines, the extra bag fees add up to much-needed revenue.

way of doing business in which services that were once bundled into the price of a ticket are offered a la carte.

An October survey of frequent travelers found that half prefer a lower ticket price in exchange for a la carte pricing for food, beverages, headphones and blankets. But the same survey, conducted for IBM, found that 82 percent described the baggage fees as a "rip-off." By comparison, only 45 percent of travelers viewed food and nonalcoholic drinks that way.

HARRY R. WEBER (AP)

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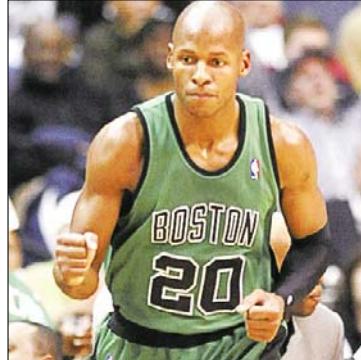
Sports Weekend

NFL

Big Fish: The Miami Dolphins, who were the worst team in the NFL last year, are one victory away from winning the AFC East | **14**



TV Lineup



PRESTON KERES/TWP

Ray Allen and the NBA-best Celtics play Kobe Bryant's Lakers Thursday.

Wednesday

8 P.M. Notre Dame closes out a sub-par football season against Hawaii in the Hawaii Bowl. ESPN

Thursday

NOON A full day of NBA action tips off with the Orlando Magic hosting the New Orleans Hornets. ESPN

5 P.M. In a rematch of the NBA Finals, the Lakers host the Celtics. ABC

8:15 P.M. Can the Wizards avoid a beatdown at the hands of LeBron James and the Cavaliers? TNT

Friday

7 P.M. The Capitals, who have been dominant at home, host the Buffalo Sabres. CSN

Saturday

1 P.M. North Carolina should have a home-field advantage against West Virginia in the Meineke Car Bowl in Charlotte. ESPN

2 P.M. Maryland's men's hoops team plays Bryant. CSN

7 P.M. Dare we say it? The Wizards have a winnable game when playing the Oklahoma City Thunder. CSN

Sunday

4:15 P.M. Mercifully, the Redskins' season comes to an end. A victory would give Jim Zorn a winning record in his first season. ESPN

7 P.M. The Capitals take on the Toronto Maple Leafs. CSN+



Jim Zorn and Jason Campbell will have plenty of talking to do in the offseason to help bolster the Redskins' attack before the start of Zorn's second season in Washington.

Pointing Fingers

We look back at why Zorn's offense hasn't produced this season

REDSKINS | Quick: When was the last time the Redskins scored 30 points? Stumped?

It was a year ago this week, when Washington went to Minnesota and pulled out a 32-21 win it needed to make the playoffs.

Assuming they don't get to the 30-point mark at San Francisco on Sunday, it'll be the first season since 2004 — the year Joe Gibbs returned — where the Redskins failed to hit that mark in any game.

But this was supposed to be the season when they *really* changed the offense, right? With coach Jim Zorn's vision alone driving the

NEW AND IMPROVED?

Three areas where the Redskins can make upgrades on offense.

→ **Offensive line:** With none of the preferred starting five linemen under the age of 30, Washington may need to use its draft picks for some help up front.

→ **Wide receiver:** Rookies Devin Thomas and Malcolm Kelly combined for just 18 catches. They need to improve to help Santana Moss out next year.

→ **Vertical passing game:** If the Redskins can't stretch the field, tailback Clinton Portis and tight end Chris Cooley — both Pro Bowlers — will have a tougher time making plays. E.B.



4:15 P.M. | FOX Sunday

offense — both conceptually and with play calls on game days — the Redskins (8-7) have scored 79 fewer points through 15 games than they did last season under the Gibbs-Al Saunders hybrid scheme.

The problem? Well, it was a little bit of everything. The line is getting old, quarterback Jason Campbell had to adapt to another offense, and the personnel wasn't always up to task for the West Coast style of play. Not to mention that the NFC East could be the only division in football where every team has a winning record.

With so many factors against a

FACIAL HAIR | **Upper Lip Service** The 49ers are going all out for Sunday's finale against the Redskins, when the team will be wearing their throw-back jerseys. More interesting than the uniforms, though, will be what's



under the helmets. Sparked by the offensive line and then expanded to a group including quarterback Shaun Hill, many 49ers will have mustaches as a tribute to the great San Francisco players of yore who sported facial hair. "Today is mustache Monday," Hill told the San Francisco Chronicle this week. (EXPRESS)

first-year head coach, it can easily be argued that next season will be Zorn's real test. Another year to plan around a good core group of offensive skill players should give an idea of how good a team — and head coach — resides in Washington.

At the very least, after last week's win over Philadelphia, Zorn knows this team is not going to quit on him. "I think playing as hard and as long as we did for the whole game and then coming out with a win, everybody can take a breath, basically," Zorn said.

Indeed, Campbell talked before each of the last two games about how the offense needed to stop playing tentatively. Sunday's game against a resurgent 49ers squad gives Washington a chance for some positive reinforcement heading into next season. "If we can win this week and finish the season at 9-7, it's not a disappointing season, but it's a season that we wish we could have back a couple of games," Campbell said. ERIC BRANDNER

The Yankees Strike Again

Teixeira turns down offers from Nats, O's to play in New York

BASEBALL | The New York Yankees reeled in another prime free agent, reaching a preliminary agreement Tuesday with first baseman Mark Teixeira for \$180 million over eight years.

A person familiar with the negotiations disclosed the agreement, which is subject to a physical. The person spoke to The Associated Press on condition of anonymity because the deal was not yet final.

Teixeira's deal raises the Yankees' offseason spending spree to \$423.5 million. Just last Thursday, the Yankees completed agreements with two pitchers, giving CC Sabathia a \$161 million, seven-year contract and A.J. Burnett an \$82.5 million, five-year deal.

Just 28, Teixeira is the type of hitter the Yankees hope will revive an offense that dropped from a major league-leading 968 runs in 2007 to 789 last season.

The switch-hitter batted a combined .308 with 33 homers and 121 RBIs for the Atlanta Braves and



Mark Teixeira, acquired by Angels midseason, agreed to a \$180 million deal with the Yankees. He is the third marquee free agent to sign with New York this year.

Los Angeles Angels, who acquired him July 29.

Boston Red Sox executives met with Teixeira and agent Scott Boras last week and were told they were being outbid. Teixeira, who is from

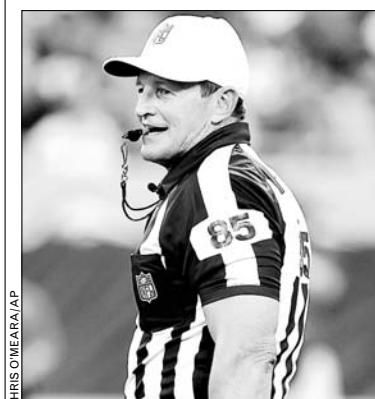
Maryland, also had discussed signing with the Baltimore Orioles.

"We would have loved to have had the player, who appealed to us because of the special circumstances of where he's from and where we are.

HIGHEST BIDDERS

The Yankees, who were recently assessed a \$26.9 million luxury tax for the 2008 season, hold baseball's four largest contracts.

- Third baseman Alex Rodriguez has baseball's biggest deal at \$275 million over 10 years.
- Shortstop Derek Jeter is second at \$189 million over 10 years
- Pitcher CC Sabathia comes in fourth behind Teixeira, at \$161 million over seven years.



Ed Hochuli's famous blunder may be the difference in who wins the AFC West.

NFL

Hochuli to Ref Lions Game, Not Broncos-Chargers

Looking for Ed Hochuli to work another Denver-San Diego game, this one with the AFC West title on the line? Forget it. Hochuli, whose blunder helped decide the first game between the Broncos and Chargers — in favor of Denver — will be a couple thousand miles east in Green Bay on Sunday for the Lions-Packers game, where Detroit will be trying to avoid the first 0-16 season in NFL history. The Broncos and Chargers play at night in the AFC West showdown that concludes the regular-season schedule. (AP)

"We are disappointed we weren't able to sign him," Bowden wrote in an e-mail, "and will now turn our attention to several other opportunities to improve our major league club this offseason." RONALD BLUM (AP)

Defensive Woes Haunt the Wizards

Washington hasn't yet recovered from the loss of center Haywood

WIZARDS | Brendan Haywood is turning out to be more important than anyone could have forecast.

The 7-footer — who had a career season at both ends of the floor last year — underwent wrist surgery in the preseason and isn't expected to return for a few months still. While Gilbert Arenas is the marquee absence, Haywood deprives the Wizards of what coach Ed Tapscott calls a "rim protector," someone who makes a difference defensively when the opposition drives the lane.

And opponents have exploited Washington's vulnerable defense in the lane for 21 wins in 25 tries

entering Tuesday night's game against Charlotte.

"You know we're losing, this is something new for the Washington Wizards since I've been here," a frustrated Andray Blatche said last week. "Without Brendan, we have a lot of defense to pick up."

When Tapscott took over the Wizards, the philosophies he laid out for the team didn't stray far from those of his predecessor, Eddie Jordan. Tapscott preached the need to establish a strong defense. In his first weeks on the job, some of the biggest applause coming from the Wizards' bench were inspired by hard defensive fouls at the rim and gutsy play without the ball. Still, with a lack of bulk in the middle, Washington has few options in the paint.

"It's our defense that's killing us," forward Antawn Jamison said.



Dallas' Devean George had little trouble scoring on the Wizards last Sunday.

Tapscott announced Monday that DeShawn Stevenson — who usually checks the opposition's best backcourt player — volunteered to

start coming off the bench, hoping that change would help him revive his struggling game. The coach said that opened the door for either Nick Young — one of the Wizards' best scorers — or Dominic McGuire — possibly the Wizards' most intense player on the defensive end — to take a place in the first five.

While Stevenson struggled offensively this season, the Wizards will have to find a way to replicate his defensive intensity early in games. Young may seem like the natural replacement to fans, but his defensive struggles have kept him off the court in the past.

"We've got the scorers, we've just got to get stops," Blatche said.

ERIC BRANDNER



Late games: Both the Wizards-Bobcats game and the Capitals-Rangers NHL contest ended after Express' deadline. For results | **Today's Washington Post, Sports**

NFL

Jets' Ellis Fined \$10K for Throwing Snowball at Fans

New York Jets defensive end Shaun Ellis was fined \$10,000 by the NFL for throwing snow at fans following the team's loss at Seattle on Sunday. Several fans threw snowballs at New York players and staff as they walked off the field after the Seahawks' 13-3 victory. As he approached the walkway leading to the locker room, Ellis reached into a pile of snow, picked up a large chunk and tossed it into the stands at Qwest Field, appearing to hit at least a few fans. No one was believed to have been injured. (AP)

NFL

Jaguars Executive Resigns

James "Shack" Harris' first personnel move set the tone for his tenure in Jacksonville. His last two sealed his fate. Harris resigned as the team's personnel chief Tuesday, taking the fall for a franchise that flopped this season. (AP)

Dolphins in Warm Waters

A year after finishing 1-15, Miami is in line to win the AFC East

NFL | Even on the verge of an improbable playoff berth, the Miami Dolphins believe the stench of their one-win season lingers.

Not that they have a problem with that. Underestimating the Dolphins made their remarkable resurgence easier.

"You look at our roster, and nobody scares you," cornerback Andre Goodman said Monday. "I think everybody thought of us as a 1-15 team, and there was no point in the season where anybody took us seriously."

Goodman said that's still the case, even with Miami tied for the AFC East lead at 10-5 with New England. Because the Dolphins hold the tiebreaker advantage, they can clinch the division title and their first playoff berth since 2001 by winning Sunday at the New York Jets.

It's a big change from a year ago this week, when Bill Parcells was hired as executive vice president of football operations to revive the franchise. Shortly after the season, he began cleaning house and fired coach Cam Cameron.



FISH STORY: Coach Tony Sparano has led the Dolphins to 10 wins this year after Miami won just once in all of last season.

Now the Dolphins rank among the NFL's hottest teams, winning four games in a row and eight of their past nine. They're physical and keep mistakes to a minimum, which fits the Parcells blueprint.

It's tempting to sell short the Dolphins, who have mastered the art of winning close games against bad teams.

Including Sunday's 38-31 vic-

HOW THE AFC EAST WILL BE WON

A look at the scenarios that could play out in the division based on Sunday's action. The Jets play the Dolphins and the Patriots play the Bills.

- Miami Dolphins: They win the AFC East with a win Sunday or a tie and a Patriots tie or loss. They clinch a playoff spot with a tie and Ravens loss.
- New England Patriots: They win the AFC East with a win Sunday and a Dolphins tie or loss. They clinch the playoffs with a win and Ravens loss or tie, or a tie and Ravens loss.
- New York Jets: They win the AFC East with a win Sunday and a Patriots loss. They clinch the playoffs with a win and Ravens loss.

tory at Kansas City, they've won six times by a touchdown or less, and they've beaten only two teams with a winning record: New England and Denver.

They've outscored the opposition by a grand total of 21 points this season, an underwhelming

“You look at our roster and nobody scares you. I think everybody thought of us as a 1-15 team, and there was no point ... where anybody took us seriously.”

ANDRE GOODMAN, MIAMI CB

margin that may help explain why only one Miami player — linebacker Joey Porter — was chosen to start in the Pro Bowl.

Coach Tony Sparano suppressed a smile when asked about any lack of respect. "Maybe there was some of that, where people still look at you as a 1-15 team, and maybe we're screwing some things up for them," he said. "Right now, more and more people have to respect our effort. This team of no stars just goes out in workmanlike fashion and prepares very well." STEVEN WINE (AP)

 **Fly, bye?** Should Brett Favre throw in the towel or play another season? Chime in | washingtonpost.com/theleague

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WE SMELL A RAT: Clive Owen is heading to Colombia. The "Children of Men" star is attached to "Cartagena," a story about an undercover agent amid Colombian drug cartels, for billionaire entrepreneur Mark Cuban's 2929 Productions.

Entertainment



LOVE FOR THE AGES: Brad Pitt and Cate Blanchett as lovers doomed to be parted in "The Curious Case of Benjamin Button."

Curiously Strong

Dazzling visuals and stunning acting make 'Button' a winner

FILM | It's the damnedest thing. You look into the elderly man's blue eyes behind a pair of old-fashioned spectacles, look at the sweet smile ringed by wrinkles, and you know that's Brad Pitt under there.

But the special effects are so

dazzling, and Pitt's performance is so gracefully convincing, that you can't help but be wowed over and over again by "The Curious Case of Benjamin Button."

Director David Fincher has always proven himself a virtuoso visual stylist — to the point of seeming like a shameless showoff at times — with films like "Fight Club," "Panic Room" and "Zodiac." Here, he's truly outdone himself: He's

made a grand, old-fashioned epic that takes mind-boggling advantage of the most modern moviemaking technology.

Fincher's film, based on an F. Scott Fitzgerald short story about a man who ages in reverse, is rambling and gorgeous — perhaps a bit overlong and gooey in the midsection — but it leaves you with a lingering wistfulness.

It's just so achingly sad: Pitt, as

An A-Lister Earns Low Marks

Tom Cruise ruins any chance 'Valkyrie' has of being enjoyable

FILM | Much ado has been made about "Valkyrie," starring Tom Cruise as would-be Hitler assassin Col. Claus von Stauffenberg.

There is the release date, which has been moved around several times until finally being set for Christmas, the perfect time for a feel-good movie about killing Nazis.

There's the marketing of the film: Is it a historical thriller or is it an action picture full of explosions?

Turns out Cruise is both the central figure in "Valkyrie" and its weakest link. He's distractingly bad in this, the iconography of his celebrity so strongly overshadowing his performance. With his hard, flat American accent, he stands out in every single scene. And he's not a good enough actor to immerse himself in this kind of period piece, or allow us to do the same.



Cruise is "distractingly bad" as would-be assassin Claus von Stauffenberg.

the title character, is doomed from the start. He can travel the world and live a life that's adventurous and full, but he can never truly be with the woman he loves, Daisy (Cate Blanchett).

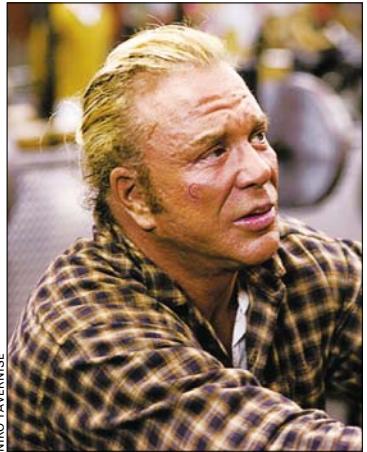
Born with the looks and decrepitude of an 80-year-old man, Benjamin is left on the doorstep of a New Orleans old-folks home at the end of World War I. Despite the newborn's startling appearance, the kindly Queenie (a lovely Taraji P. Henson), who works there, feels immediately drawn to him and raises the baby as her own.

He feels comfortable among the home's residents, even though he's getting physically younger as they die off. There's a playful innocence to Pitt's performance in these early scenes, and a sweetness that he'll maintain for the rest of the film.

Benjamin goes to work for a drunk tugboat captain, which takes him to Russia and the film's most exciting segment. There, he embarks on an unexpected affair with the wealthy wife of a spy. Tilda Swinton brings smarts and smoldering sensuality to the role — she shakes the picture up — but she also helps define Benjamin as he grows.

It's all preparation for Daisy, anyway — for the romance they will fleetingly find in the middle of their lives. Blanchett is fiery as the headstrong ballerina who doesn't immediately realize she's ready for Benjamin, but the way she softens toward him gives the film both a zest and a feeling of melancholy — because we know it can't last.

CHRISTY LEMIRE (AP)



Mickey Rourke's not the prettiest man we've ever seen, but can he act.

Squirm In Your Seats

Audience discomfort overshadows strong acting in 'Wrestler'

FILM | "The Wrestler" doesn't add up. It's constructed with great care around a lead performance that is everything it could possibly be, but the picture itself is off-putting and disappointing. How can this be?

That performance, as all of Hollywood already knows, is Mickey Rourke's affecting work as Randy "the Ram" Robinson, a once great name in professional wrestling who has fallen on hard times.

Rourke, who's had his own bouts with career disintegration, falls naturally into this role. The actor has said he hesitated "because it was a little too close," and that innate understanding of what his character is going through, combined with Rourke's ability, make this one of the performances of the year.

Initially, at least, the rest of "The Wrestler" (directed by Darren Aronofsky) feels like a good fit with Rourke's work. Things start to fall apart when "The Wrestler's" determination to wallow in the pain of Robinson's bouts reveals itself. A certain amount of that is necessary, but it feels like Aronofsky is making a fetish of audience discomfort.

KENNETH TURAN (LOS ANGELES TIMES)

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Entertainment



24'S COMPANY: Owen Wilson, Jennifer Aniston and 22 dogs star in "Marley & Me."

A Sit, Stay, Feel Sad Movie

'Marley & Me' is not the happy-go-lucky affair you'd expect

FILM | Aww, look at that cute, fluffy puppy in those "Marley & Me" ads.

He's so sweet and innocent with those pleading eyes and that shiny, red bow around his neck. It almost makes you think you're in for a feel-good comedy about a rambunctious yellow Lab and the family who loves him no matter what chaos he causes.

Well, "Marley & Me" is all that, but if you've read the best-selling memoir by John Grogan that inspired the movie, you also know that it has more than its share of hanky moments. Watching all those heart-tugging stories play out before your eyes on a giant screen, though, we're not talking about just a tear or two welling up — we're talking grown men and women snuffling and sobbing uncontrollably, then dashing from the theater before the lights come up to avoid making eye contact with all the other blubbering saps.

Seeing the ending, in all its hor-

rifically sad detail, is bad enough if you're a grown-up (and a dog person). If you're a little kid expecting a happy puppy movie, "Marley & Me" could cause serious trauma requiring hours of therapy and many scoops of ice cream to repair.

So yes, it's effective in its ability to evoke emotion — having said that, it's not a particularly good movie. Director David Frankel ("The Devil Wears Prada") leaps back and forth in blandly episodic fashion between the incorrigible Marley doing wacky, destructive things and his owners, journalists John (Owen Wilson) and Jenny (Jennifer Aniston), furthering their lives as a married couple and, ultimately, as parents. Here, there's no momentum. And that's a shame, because Grogan's book is a rich, rollicking recollection of a life lived.

Despite their sunny, blonde looks, Wilson (at 40) and Aniston (at 39) feel too old to be playing young newlyweds starting a life together at the beginning of "Marley & Me," and their playful marital banter seems forced. But they do settle in and have a couple of believable arguments as their characters get older and the natural stresses of marriage, a home, three kids and a torturous dog take hold. (An early scene in which Jenny suffers a miscarriage, and Marley responds with unexpected sympathy and grace, is also an emotional doozy.)

It took 22 different dogs to play Marley, though, at various ages and sizes. For that part, the casting was always perfect. CHRISTY LEMIRE (AP)



TAKE HER DOWN A NOTCH: Damon Herriman has joined the cast of "Lost & Found." The NBC drama centers on Tessa Cooper (Katee Sackhoff), an offbeat LAPD detective, who is sent as a punishment to the basement to work on John and Jane Doe cases.

Television

ON TV THIS WEEKEND

LESSONS LEARNED

In **IT'S A WONDERFUL LIFE** (8 p.m., NBC, Wed.), George Bailey (Jimmy Stewart) imagines that he has never been born. That's the dark, existential gist of this Frank Capra film.

MORE GOOD CHEER

The voices of Emma Roberts and Norm MacDonald animate the 2008 holiday special **THE FLIGHT BEFORE CHRISTMAS** (8 p.m., CW, Wed.).

DESPERATE FOR A PAYCHECK

Rob Lowe of "The West Wing" surely paid his dues by appearing in the 2002 movie **THE CHRISTMAS SHOES** (9 p.m., Lifetime, Wed.).

SWEET BABY JAMES

Singer-songwriter James Taylor appears on **SPECTACLE WITH ELVIS COSTELLO** (9 p.m., Sundance, Wed.).

TRIPPY HOLIDAYS

Can Christmas encompass the psychedelic and the hip? Check out The Flaming Lips' home movie, **CHRISTMAS ON MARS**



Regis, Mickey and Kelly host the "Walt Disney World Christmas Day Parade."

(midnight, Sundance, Wed.).

OLDIES BUT GOODIES

TV Land offers Christmas-themed episodes of sitcoms from past decades, beginning with **THE ANDY GRIFFITH SHOW** (7 a.m., Thu.) and ending with **THE COSBY SHOW** (8:30 p.m.).

GEEK OUT!

Fans of **STAR TREK: THE NEXT GENERATION**

(8 a.m. Thu. to 6 a.m., Fri.) can spend a whole day and night with the series that ran from 1987 to 1994, starring Patrick Stewart, Jonathan Frakes, LeVar Burton, Colm Meaney and Whoopie Goldberg, among others.

MAGIC IN THE AIR

Regis Philbin, Kelly Ripa and Ryan Seacrest share the hosting duties for

the WALT DISNEY WORLD CHRISTMAS DAY PARADE

(10 a.m., ABC, Thu.), broadcast (in high definition) from both the Florida and California branches of the theme-park kingdom.

WARM WELCOME

Howie Long hosts **HEROES AT HOME** (8 p.m., MyNetwork, Thu.), recognizing veterans returning from Iraq.

CHRISTMAS WITH THE CRANK

Spend Boxing Day with television's most dyspeptic doctor on a 12-hour marathon of **HOUSE** (11 a.m. to 10 p.m., USA, Fri.) repeats. Like many good shows, "House" is beginning to suffer from overexposure.

FIGHT FOR THEIR RIGHTS

Re-experience the first season of **WHALE WARS** (4 p.m. through 6 a.m., Animal Planet, Fri.), a 16-hour marathon of the series set aboard an activists' vessel.

CATCH UP ON YOUR CLASSICS

Peter O'Toole stars in director David Lean's 1962 desert drama **LAWRENCE OF ARABIA** (8 p.m., TCM, Fri.), a film that still sets the standard for widescreen movie epics.



Jennifer Aniston is profiled on Friday night's "True Hollywood Story" on E!

IF YOU LOOK LIKE HER, YES

Can you still be America's girl-next-door when you're pushing 40? **TRUE HOLLYWOOD STORY** (9 p.m., E!, Fri.) profiles Jennifer Aniston, the former "Friends" star who went on to appear in both big Hollywood romantic comedies and independent films.

HE'S GOT JOKES

Matt Braunger appears on **LATE SHOW WITH DAVID LETTERMAN** (11:35 p.m., CBS). KEVIN McDONOUGH (UNITED FEATURE SYNDICATE)

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LOOK out

* TRENDS, CULTURE, DISCOVERIES, IDEAS, PEOPLE

Thrift

Recyclers reclaim boxes and paper for annual holiday gifts

While regifting may be frowned upon by some, re-gift-wrapping can be a delight for many.

Every holiday season, dedicated holiday recyclers find ways to reclaim wrapping paper, containers and bows, using them again and again in later years. Those who do it say they can help save the planet, while spending less and savoring memories.

"I haven't had anyone give me funny looks when I ask for the [gift] bag back. Most people are just interested in what's inside and never worry about the bag," said Susan Palmquist, whose Budgetsmartgirl.com offers money-saving tips on everything from food to hair color.

“Most people are just interested in what's inside and never worry about the bag.”

SUSAN PALMQUIST,
BUDGETSMARTGIRL.COM

What to save, stash and revive for later use depends on your comfort level. Gift wrap with few tears, folds or dangling tape can be ironed, tissue paper with no tears can be smoothed and flattened for storage, bows can be steamed and fluffed, fabric bags gently cleaned, and ribbons pressed and rewound for use good as new.

Boxes and bags from Tiffany, Saks, Nordstrom and other high-end stores are known for durability, said enthusiasts, some of whom

carry on Christmas recycling traditions that began with their parents and grandparents.

Tracey McBride has used three of her mother's decorative English biscuit tins for gifts and Santa treats under the tree after she rescued them from her parents' garage sale pile more than 20 years ago. Like Fitzpatrick, she keeps them in the family so she can use them again, recalling her mother's story about craving the biscuits when she was pregnant with McBride's older brother while living in England.

"They remind me of exotic gift boxes," McBride said.

Growing up, McBride remembers the tins around the house, filled with teas, office supplies and crack-

ers. Now, after the death of her mom from multiple sclerosis in 2006, they're also filled with bittersweet thoughts each Christmas.

"I have the original three tins and a half-dozen more. They look charming set under a tree and evoke the memory of my mother," McBride said.

Recycling gift wrap and other holiday trappings has value beyond sentiment. The Clean Air Council estimates that added food waste, shopping bags, packaging, paper, bows and ribbons create an additional 1 million tons of waste per week between Thanksgiving and New Year's Day — much of it going to landfills.

Some of that can be avoided.

Leslie Carlson of Portland, Ore., said she has gift wrap on hand that's older than her marriage — about 10 years. She hasn't bought a ribbon in five years or more.

"We always warn the receiver that the present is not actually from Nordstrom, even though we do think you'll like it," she said.

INSIDE

Britney's dad gets a raise for 2009 | 26



Blog Log: D.C. is an awful capital city | 24

Discussions: Holiday tips from AAA | 24



DAMIAN DOVARGANES/AP

GOOD AS NEW: Tracey McBride shows off her collection of reusable vintage gift boxes at her home in Long Beach, Calif.

Reduce, Reuse, Rewrap



JACK DEMPSEY/AP

Recycling gift wrap and packages helps save money and reduce holiday waste.

Dorothy Molstad of Stillwater, Minn., said recycling fabric bags is so popular in her extended family that each household has

its own patterns for easy retrieval and return.

"You can make it to fit any gift you need, and clean up after gift

opening is easy," she said.

If you have no intention of chasing down gift boxes or bags after turning them over to friends, family or colleagues, you can cover store logos with inexpensive decals or seasonal fabric as a way to encourage receivers to pass them on rather than throw them out.

Veteran holiday recyclers suggest saving a variety of box sizes that can nest inside each other to avoid flattening them during storage. Or you can fill up your favorites to protect ribbons and bows from getting crushed.

"For as long as I can remember my parents neatly folded the wrapping paper, saved ribbons and boxes, and it used to drive me crazy," said Kara DiCamillo of Newport, R.I. "I think they still use a box from a company that went out of business 20 years ago — and we still laugh about it each Christmas. Now, as I've gotten older and conscious about the environment, I am following in their footsteps."

LEANNE ITALIE (AP)

Lookout Online

express nightout

>> EXPRESSNIGHTOUT.COM

SOUND BETS

Norwegian Christmas

Norway's embassy always produces fun events, but Christopher Porter has been getting cozy at home thanks to the lovely music of Kirkelig Kulturverksted. The Norwegian label produces gorgeous spiritual sounds that even a pagan could love, and we have a playlist just in time for the holiday. | COMING UP



LIFE & STUFF

Holiday Blowout

All month we've been writing about things that lead up to the holidays. From the District's best Xmas tunes to events that have nothing to do with the holidays, play catch-up and spend your last work day figuring out what you're going to do during the break. | ONLINE NOW

SOUND BETS

Calling on Mary

Aimee Mann is the queen of Christmas. In addition to her concerts, Mann has taken to YouTube for the past two years for skit-based holiday greetings featuring comedy and music superstars. Log on to see what can be considered her 2007 and 2008 e-Christmas cards. | ONLINE NOW



poll center

YESTERDAY'S RESULTS AS OF 5 P.M.

DO YOU AGREE WITH THE SCIENTIST WHO RECENTLY CONCLUDED THAT GOLF IS A SPORT?

YES 62%

NO 38%



"Hardly. By that standard I'm a freakin' triathlete since I play bocce ball, croquet and lawn darts. Golf is a skill, a useless skill, but definitely NOT a sport."

COMMENTER JOHN_M, RESPONDING TO TUESDAY'S POLL CENTER QUESTION, "DO YOU AGREE WITH THE SCIENTIST WHO RECENTLY CONCLUDED THAT GOLF IS A SPORT?"

66 This just gives credence to people who want an easy out to make them feel good trying to be healthy. It's the same thing for people who do yoga, pole dancing, shaping classes or whatever."

COMMENTER TIM, WHO ADDED, "I GOLF, IT DEFINITELY TAKES SKILL. IT'S A FUN ACTIVITY."

66 Absolutely. An ex-boyfriend of mine was a semi-professional golfer and every day he'd [come] home like he'd been on the treadmill for 8 hours. Golf is intense."

COMMENTER AM, WHO ADDED, "IT MAY NOT BE THE MOST CARDIO-HEAVY SPORT, BUT IT TAKES A LOT OF FITNESS AND POWER."

SEE HOW YOUR METRO STATION VOTED AT EXPRESSNIGHTOUT.COM/POLLCENTER

Blog Log

"Typically, we're inundated with cards with photos of the Capitol dome, or the Library of Congress in the snow, but not this year."

MR-T-IN-DC.LIVEJOURNAL.COM HAS NOTICED A DROPOFF IN HOLIDAY GREETING CARDS FROM VENDORS AT WORK, ADDING, "INSTEAD, I'M GETTING TONS OF E-CARDS."



"Then I got handed the bill. \$671. At that point I thought I was going to have a heart attack. Luckily for me, my out-of-pocket expenditure on that bill amounted to a grand total of \$0."

NOTICEDFROMNORTHWEST.WORDPRESS.COM HAD TO MAKE AN IMPROMPTU HOSPITAL TRIP, BUT IS GLAD TO HAVE INSURANCE.

"I DON'T KNOW of any other capital city with the inequities of power that you can see [here.] I've been [to] Rome, Paris, London, Brussels, Athens, Edinburgh, Cairo and Tel Aviv. None of these cities has an area as oppressed as Anacostia."

BLOG.ALTHIPPO.COM REACTS TO A WASHINGTON POST ARTICLE ON THE POTENTIAL EFFECT OF THE OBAMA ADMINISTRATION ON D.C., ADDING, "YES, I EXPECT OBAMA TO PLAY A ROLE IN PUSHING THE EVOLUTION OF THIS POTENTIALLY GREAT CITY."

Discussions

Holiday Travel Tips

LON ANDERSON, director of Government and Public Affairs for AAA Mid-Atlantic, was online Tuesday and offered travel advice for the holidays.

Will gas stations and restaurants along major interstates and highways be open on Christmas? Or should I wait to travel across the country on Dec. 26?

Along the interstates, gas stations will mostly be open, and you should find some restaurants open as well, but some will certainly be closed. Keep your tank at least half full for good measure, and know that your eating choices will be more limited, so it'll be no time to get picky, but you should

be OK traveling on Christmas. Off the interstates, the picture will be quite different with most everything closed, I suspect.

Can you tell me if gas additives actually extend the usefulness of gas and is worth the cost?

Additives can help address specific problems of some aging engines sometimes, but generally don't deliver a lot. Many want them to increase mileage, and we are not aware of any that make a difference in mileage. Keeping the car tuned, and the oil and filters changed will be more effective. Let me remind everyone to please make sure your car is ready for the trip before you head out. Good tires, good wipers, etc., and consider putting some extra goodies in your trunk to be safe — extra windshield wash, a scraper, a blanket, flares or safety triangles, etc.

Can you let me know which day is worse for traveling north, the day before the Christmas or the day after? Is Christmas the lightest?

Christmas day will definitely be the lightest day. Our poll shows that a huge number, about 17 percent of all travelers, will be traveling Wednesday, as compared to only 10 percent on Christmas. The day after, roads may be open for travel, but around shopping centers and mall areas, they will be terrible.

Will Delaware actually have all of its toll booths open on I-95 during the next week and a half?

We believe they will be fully manned. Those lines victimize thousands of travelers regularly.

TODAY ON DISCUSSIONS: Veterinarian and syndicated columnist Michael W. Fox takes questions on pet care and animal health at 11 a.m. | washingtonpost.com/discussions

Bizarro | Dan Piraro

Pooch Cafe | Paul Gilligan

Pearls Before Swine | Stephan Pastis

The Duplex | Glenn McCoy

Cornered | Mike Baldwin

Horoscope
By Stella Wilder

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19) Someone is looking out for you — which is a good thing because you have a knack for getting yourself into trouble right now.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18) Suggestion itself isn't going to get the job done. You're going to have to be more explicit when you give instructions.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20) Control is the key; it will be easy for you to go too far, say too much, or react too loudly, so you'll have to strive for moderation.

ARIES (March 21-April 19) Accidents happen, but you'll want to do everything you can to anticipate mishaps and avoid them. There may be a price to pay.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20) Keep your finger on the pulse of the family, and you should be able to orchestrate things in a way that delights everyone.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20) You may have trouble saying exactly what you mean, but if you are as demonstrative as pos-

sible others will understand you.

CANCER (June 21-July 22) You may not wake in the best mood, but later the actions of a friend or co-worker can lift your spirits considerably.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22) The time has come for you to take what you have learned and forge ahead on your own — at least until you reach a new and unfamiliar obstacle.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22) You'll have more than one chance to enjoy the social environment. Don't overdo it, however, especially during the evening.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22) Personal affairs are sure to take precedence. A family member is likely to come to you with a problem only you can solve.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21) It's a good day for you to do more for family and friends than you had planned on. Never fear, you'll enjoy considerable rewards yourself.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21) A misunderstanding toward mid-day has you wondering just how it will all come out. Communication is the key; ask questions.

Letters
Warren Espouses Bigotry

IN HIS LETTER, "In Defense of Warren Pick" (Dec. 23), Rick Huebner incorrectly characterizes the outrage over Obama's pick of Rick Warren to deliver the inauguration invocation. It is not that Warren simply disagrees on social issues; it's that he has cruelly likened homo-

sexuality to pedophilia, bestiality and polygamy. I also challenge the notion that it's simply "Democrats and activists" who are shocked by Obama picking Warren. I'd bet it's just about anyone who detests utter bigotry. As a gay man of faith, I find the value in reaching across cultural and political lines, but I don't believe this means embracing hateful ideas and those who espouse them.

— KEN SEIFERT
Rockville, Md.

WRITE TO EXPRESS: Include name, hometown and telephone number. Submissions may be edited. E-mail to inbox@readexpress.com or mail to Express Letters, PO Box 17370, Arlington, VA 22216.

Today in History
1524 Portuguese navigator

Vasco da Gama — who had discovered a sea route around Africa to India — dies in Cochin, India.

1814 The War of 1812 officially ends as the United States and Britain sign the Treaty of Ghent in Belgium.

1851 Fire devastates the Library of Congress, destroying about 35,000 volumes.

1865 Several veterans of the Confederate Army form a private social club in Pulaski, Tenn.

called the Ku Klux Klan.

1943 President Franklin D. Roosevelt appoints Gen. Dwight D. Eisenhower supreme commander of Allied forces as part of Operation Overlord.

1968 The Apollo 8 astronauts, orbiting the moon, read passages from the Old Testament Book of Genesis during a Christmas Eve telecast that featured live images of Earth.

1980 Americans remember the U.S. hostages in Iran by burning candles or shining lights for 417 seconds — one second for each day of captivity.

LOOK out

People



Fey can see awesome from her house.

NOT AT ALL POLITICAL

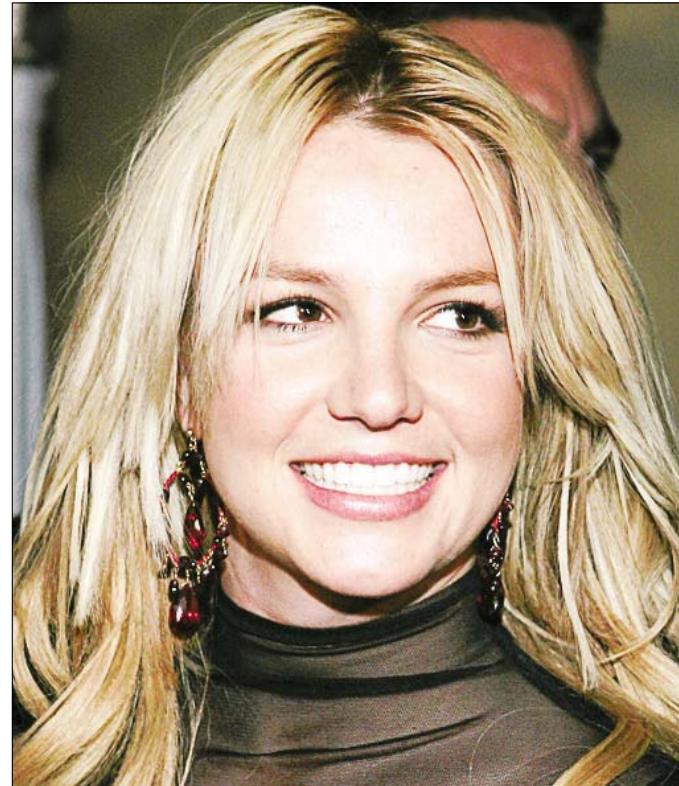
Journalists Love Tina Fey in Totally Fair, Balanced Way

TINA FEY is the entertainer of the year? You betcha. Fey was voted The Associated Press' Entertainer of the Year, an annual honor chosen by newspaper editors and broadcast producers across the country. (AP)

JUST GUESSING

The Boss' Love Probably Isn't FOR President Bush

BRUCE SPRINGSTEEN will release an album, "Working on Dream," on Jan. 27, just 15 months after his last one. Blogging on his Web site Tuesday, he said he was inspired to create a "love-in-the-time-of-Bush meditation." (AP)



COST OF LIVING

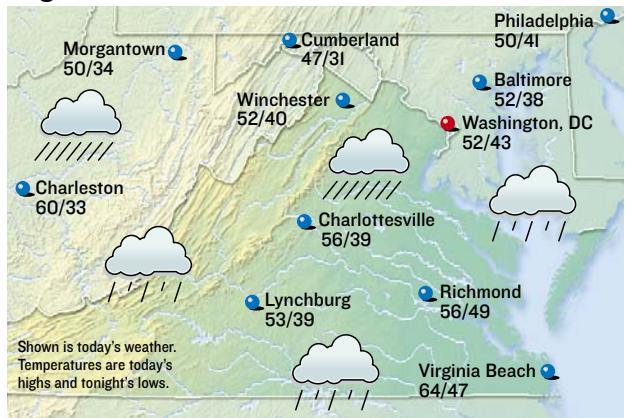
Papa: Fully Vested

A court has put a higher value on being **BRITNEY SPEARS'** father this year: about \$75 an hour. For helping his daughter through her turbulent period, Jamie Spears on Monday was awarded an additional \$51,000 payout, reflecting an increase in his monthly payments since he took over his 27-year-old daughter's affairs in February. (AP)

5 Day Forecast for the Washington Area



Regional Weather



Forecasts and graphics provided by AccuWeather, Inc. ©2008

Almanac

Washington, D.C., through 4 p.m. Tues.

Temperature

High	32°
Low	17°
Normal high	45°
Normal low	30°
Average humidity	44%

Precipitation

24 hours ending 4 p.m.	0.00"
Month to date	2.93"
Normal month to date	2.25"
Year to date	46.45"
Last year to date	31.76"
Normal year to date	38.66"

For up-to-the-minute weather, see: washingtonpost.com/weather

Regional Forecast

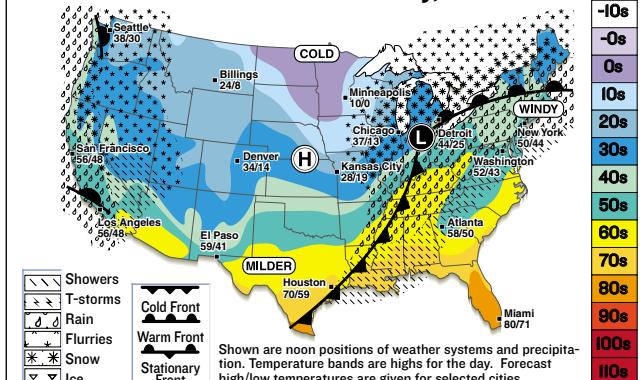
D.C. Metro: Today, rain, fog, breezy. High 52. Wind south-southwest 10-20 mph. Tonight, mostly cloudy. Low 43. Wind west-northwest 15-25 mph.

Sun and Moon

Sunrise today 7:25 a.m.
Sunset tonight 4:51 p.m.
Moonrise today 5:07 a.m.
Moonset today 2:26 p.m.



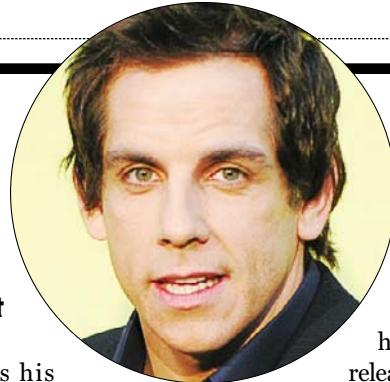
National Weather for Wednesday, December 24



National Cities

City	Today Hi/Lo/W	Thur. Hi/Lo/W	City	Today Hi/Lo/W	Thur. Hi/Lo/W
Atlanta	58/50/c	59/50/c	Amsterdam	46/36/c	41/30/pc
Boston	49/41/r	47/25/pc	Athens	48/35/s	46/40/s
Chicago	37/13/sn	30/29/c	Berlin	38/29/sh	32/23/s
Dallas	65/40/pc	64/60/c	Buenos Aires	86/70/s	84/64/t
Denver	34/14/pc	42/20/pc	Calgary	15/-2/c	11/-4/c
Honolulu	81/72/s	81/70/pc	Dublin	52/39/pc	50/39/pc
Los Angeles	56/48/r	58/44/sh	Geneva	49/32/s	39/29/pc
Miami	80/71/pc	82/69/s	Moscow	25/18/sf	23/16/sf
New York City	50/44/r	47/32/pc	Rome	54/43/s	48/39/r
Orlando	78/63/s	79/60/s	Sydney	72/61/pc	77/59/s
Seattle	38/30/sn	37/27/c	Tokyo	52/43/pc	55/39/s

s-sunny, pc-partly cloudy, c-cloudy, sh-showers, t-thunderstorms, r-rain, sf-snow flurries, sn-snow, i-ice.



Stiller: Often funnier with a yellow background.

to New York's Mount Sinai Hospital, where he was treated and released, according to the New York Daily News. Stiller won acclaim this summer for "Tropic Thunder," a farcical tale about the making of an action film set in the Vietnam War. (EXPRESS)



ration of Barack Obama. According to the New York Post's Page Six, Winfrey will stay in the Royal Suite at the Four Seasons. It costs \$15,000 a night. (EXPRESS)



INJURED Doctor Refuses To Attach Mechanical C3PO Hand To Actor 'Just For Laughs'

BEN STILLER has his hand in a sling following a winter sports mishap. "I can confirm he broke his hand snowboarding," said publicist Kelly Bush. The 43-year-old was admitted Sunday

HOUSING Georgetown Sights in Dismay

OPRAH WINFREY's camp has dismissed rumors the Queen of All Media is plunking down \$50 million for Evermay, an estate in Georgetown. They do, however, say she has made plans to sleep in D.C. for five nights during the January inauguration.

LOOK out

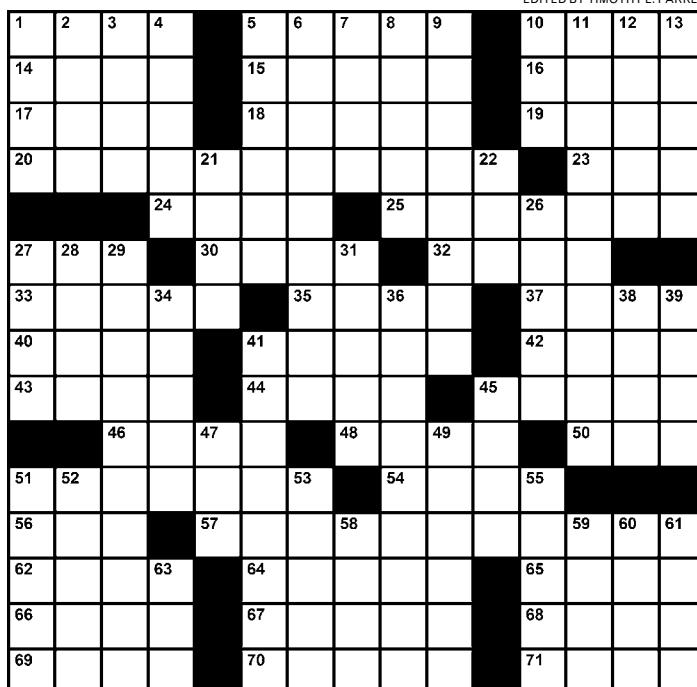
CROSSWORD | IN THE CHAIR

ACROSS

1 Apple-pie pros
5 Commercial district
10 Cartoon dog in uniform
14 Russian John
15 Occupation
16 Dance with a limo?
17 Involved story
18 Pitcher's grip improver
19 Browser's find
20 Prepare for a super market outing, perhaps
23 Unit of RAM
24 Per diem teachers
25 Title for Gandhi
27 Circle segment
30 You may take it lying down
32 Work well together
33 Cheese nibbler
35 Word on the Irish presidential seal
37 Breakaway group
40 "Rounders" star Damon
41 Shows, as one's soul
42 Place to worship from
43 "Measure twice, cut ___"
44 Wishes otherwise
45 Muscat man
46 Island that's home to a state capital
48 House of Lords members
50 Cookbook amt.
51 Type of bath
54 Without an edge
56 Roadside stop

DOWN

57 Score less, illegally
62 Top-flight individuals?
64 Like bighorns
65 Hardly coy
66 Not well-done
67 One who handles hot stuff
68 Wilderness target
69 Oratory recess
70 Makes a run for it
71 Restrictive burden



for speed
31 They might squeal
34 Turf, to menu makers
36 Place to call home
38 Puts out of work
39 Ballroom blunder
41 Give the cold shoulder to
42 Yacht personification
44 Wishes otherwise
45 Muscat man
46 Island that's home to a state capital
48 House of Lords members
50 Cookbook amt.
51 Type of bath
54 Without an edge
56 Roadside stop

52 Open, as toothpaste
53 Czech playwright-turned-president
55 Full of back talk
58 It climbs in the jungle
59 Roman with a bad rep
60 Difficult journey
61 Eyelid problem
63 U.S. national anthem's fifth word

Yesterday's Solution

1	R	E	3	S	4	T	5	S	6	A	7	O	8	N	9	E	10	S	11	N	12	A	13	P																			
14	U	L	N	A	15	C	R	A	S	S	16	C	A	V	E	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39					
40	E	G	G	41	H	E	A	T	42	I	N	E	R	T	43	44	45	46	47	48	49	50	51	52	53	54	55	56	57	58	59	60	61	62	63	64	65	66	67	68	69	70	71

SUDOKU | MEDIUM

Fill in the boxes so each row, column and 3-by-3 square includes the digits 1 through 9. See www.sudoku.com for solution, tips and computer program.

Need more Sudoku?
Find another Sudoku puzzle in the Comics section of the Post every Sunday and in the Style section Monday through Saturday.

Yesterday's Solution

4	1	3	9	5	2	8	7	6
5	9	2	7	8	6	1	4	3
6	7	8	3	4	1	2	9	5
9	8	6	2	3	7	4	5	1
1	3	5	6	9	4	7	2	8
7	2	4	5	1	8	3	6	9
3	6	7	8	2	5	9	1	4
2	4	9	1	6	3	5	8	7
8	5	1	4	7	9	6	3	2

7		9		6
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5		8	6	1
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6	1		3	2
4		6	2	9
	4		2	5
2		3	7	

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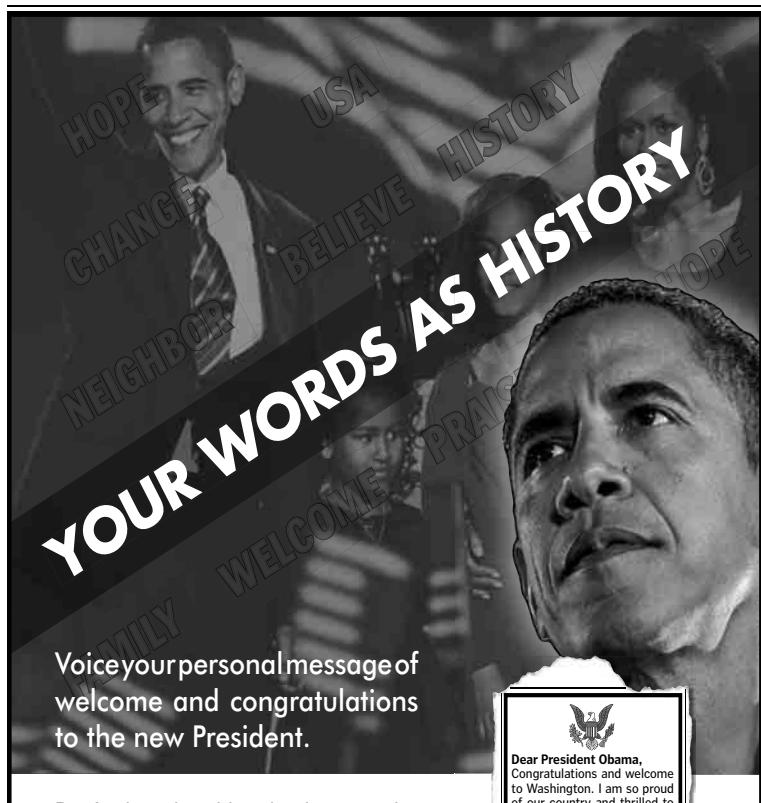
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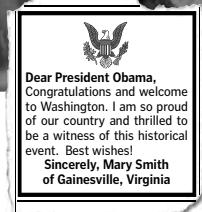
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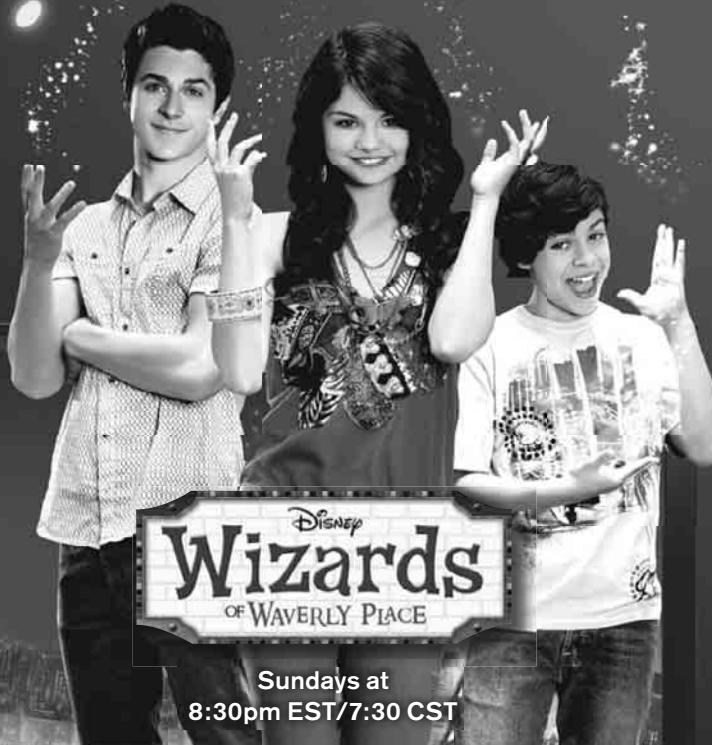
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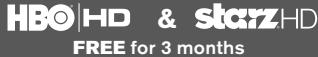
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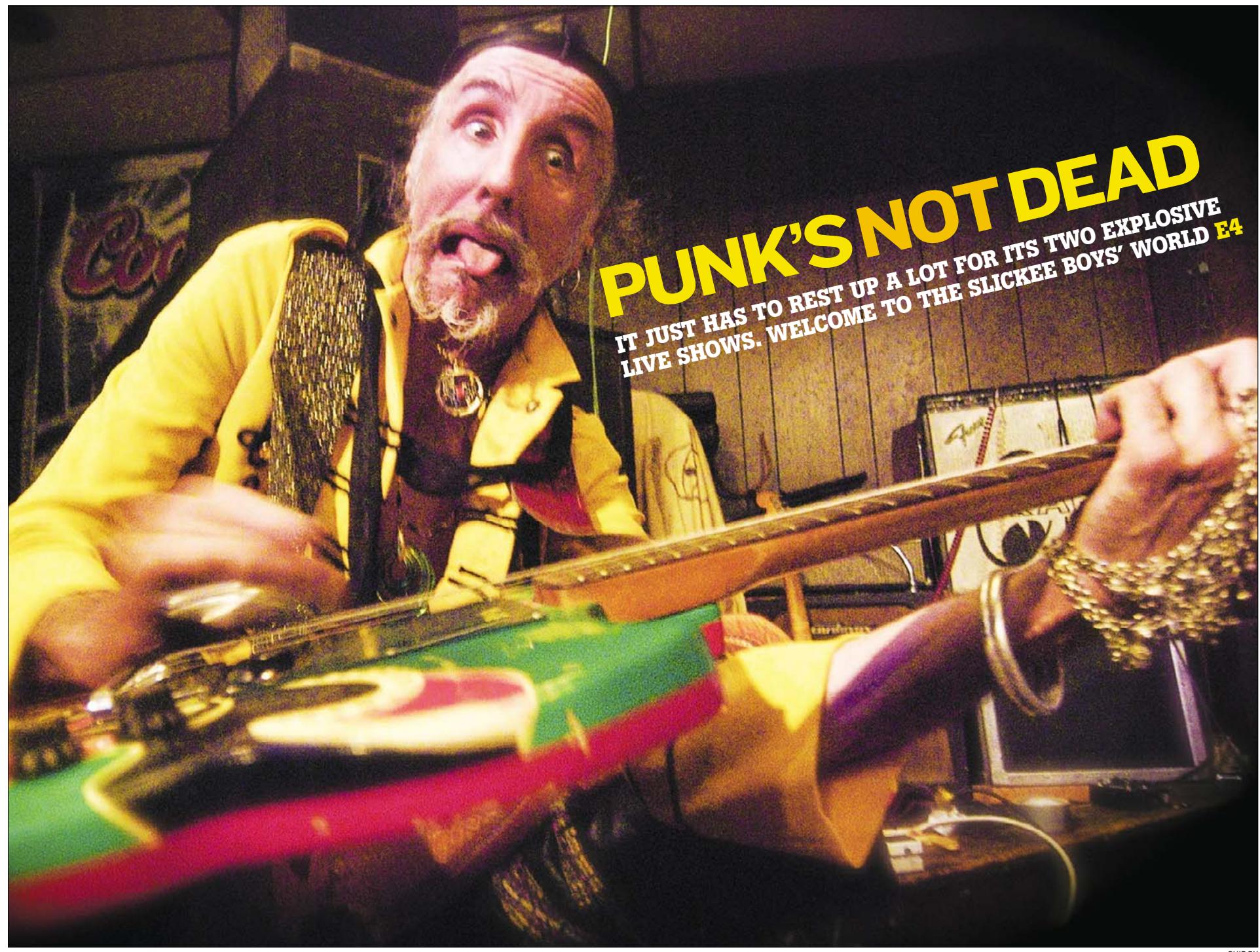
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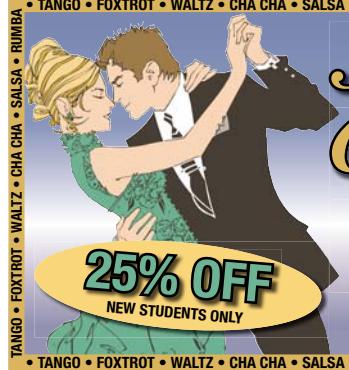
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* NAME: Darren Aronofsky
GIG: Director of "The Wrestler"

WRESTLERS PROTECT EACH OTHER from harm in the ring, sell their baby face or heel personae and, after taking a beating, they grab a beer together, maybe hit a strip club. This is what happens in the underground wrestling circuits, and in the film "The Wrestler." The story of a washed-up wrestler doing whatever it takes — performance-enhancing drugs, complete disregard for his body and his family — to reach the big time again stars Mickey Rourke, an actor with comeback issues of his own. Rourke is gaining some serious Oscar buzz for his portrayal of Randy "The Ram" Robinson.

What kind of physical transformation did Rourke go through?

The physicality was really hard. I wasn't sure if Mickey could pull it off. He's normally 190, a big guy,

but not Hulk Hogan. He put on 36 pounds of muscle over six months and turned into a wrestler.

Who did you base his character on?

I'd say Randy "The Ram" is an amalgamation of a lot of different wrestlers. The more of these old-timers that we met, the more stories we'd heard before, a lot of the stories were similar, so we kind of shaped it into our own story.

Who was the guy Rourke wrestles in the film's most notoriously gruesome fight scene?

Necro Butcher is who he wrestles, an underground cult American hero. He's a marquee top villain draw. He's the last guy on the card, and everyone in the crowd goes crazy. Although now he just changed his name to Hollywood Dylan Summers, he has a manager named Aaron Aronofsky who also gets beat up a lot. He's the real deal,



NIKO TAVERNIES

Aaronofsky, left, on the set of "The Wrestler," about a washed-up athlete/entertainer.

a hardcore wrestler, and that stuff really goes on.

How come so many scenes were shot from behind Rourke?

I wanted it to be sort of a proactive documentary — someone looks over; you react to it. In a documentary there's no way to know where they'll move. But here, it just became a language.

What kind of reaction have you had from pro wrestlers?

We brought out Rowdy Roddy Piper once and, after the movie, he stands up and all we see is a silhouette of a man. We were terrified that he hated the movie, but he basically came up to Mickey, gave him a hug and starting sobbing in his arms because it was the first time that his story has been

"The more of these old-timers that we met, the more stories we'd heard before."

told. For Mickey and me it was a big thrill to hear the appreciation from those guys.

Where did the idea come from?

When I graduated from film school, I had a bunch of ideas and one of them was "The Wrestler." Back in '02, me and producer Scott Franklin started working on some ideas and we read this script from Rob Siegel, who was the editor of the Onion. He ... had a lot of humor, but also a lot of darkness. And we started talking and, 25 drafts later, we shot it. It was a long process. ALFREDO FLORES

→ Area theaters, opens Thu.

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Play by Play (by Play)

They have seen the neo-future, and it goes by really fast

STAGE | For the Neo-Futurists, 30 is the magic number.

That's the number of plays the Chicago-based company strives to perform over the span of 60 minutes in its high-energy performance piece "Too Much Light Makes the Baby Go Blind," now at the Woolly Mammoth Theatre. During each production, the five members of the company give the audience a raw and engaging show, performing playlets they've written and crafted themselves.

The short plays within "Too Much Light" vary wildly from unrepentantly silly to serious and personal to Dadaist and intellec-



TOILET HUMOR: Neo-Futurists Sharon Greene and Caitlin Stainken share a seat.

tual. Some of the bits' titles are "You Only Need One Reason NOT to Casually Date God," "Let's Pretend Mommy and Daddy," and "Lesbians: Subtle But Not Subtle Enough."

Each show has a "menu" of plays with a number assigned. After a play ends, audience members call out the numbers of plays they want to see — adding a level of randomness to an already eclec-

tic performance.

"Since we don't know what order the plays will come in, we try to get a certain number of plays in every genre we write and in every spirit or tone," said cast member Sharon Greene. "Even though the plays are different from night to night and menu to menu, they should all have something silly and short ... and they should all have something personal in them."

The Neos also swap out existing plays for new ones after every performance.

Cast member and artistic director Jay Torrence says the constant change meshes well with the energy of the show.

"The chaos of the night, the screaming, the interaction — the random order complements the random content," he said.

DAN MILLER

→ *Woolly Mammoth Theatre*, 641 D St. NW; through Jan. 4, \$30; 202-393-3939, woollymammoth.net. (Archives-Navy Memorial)

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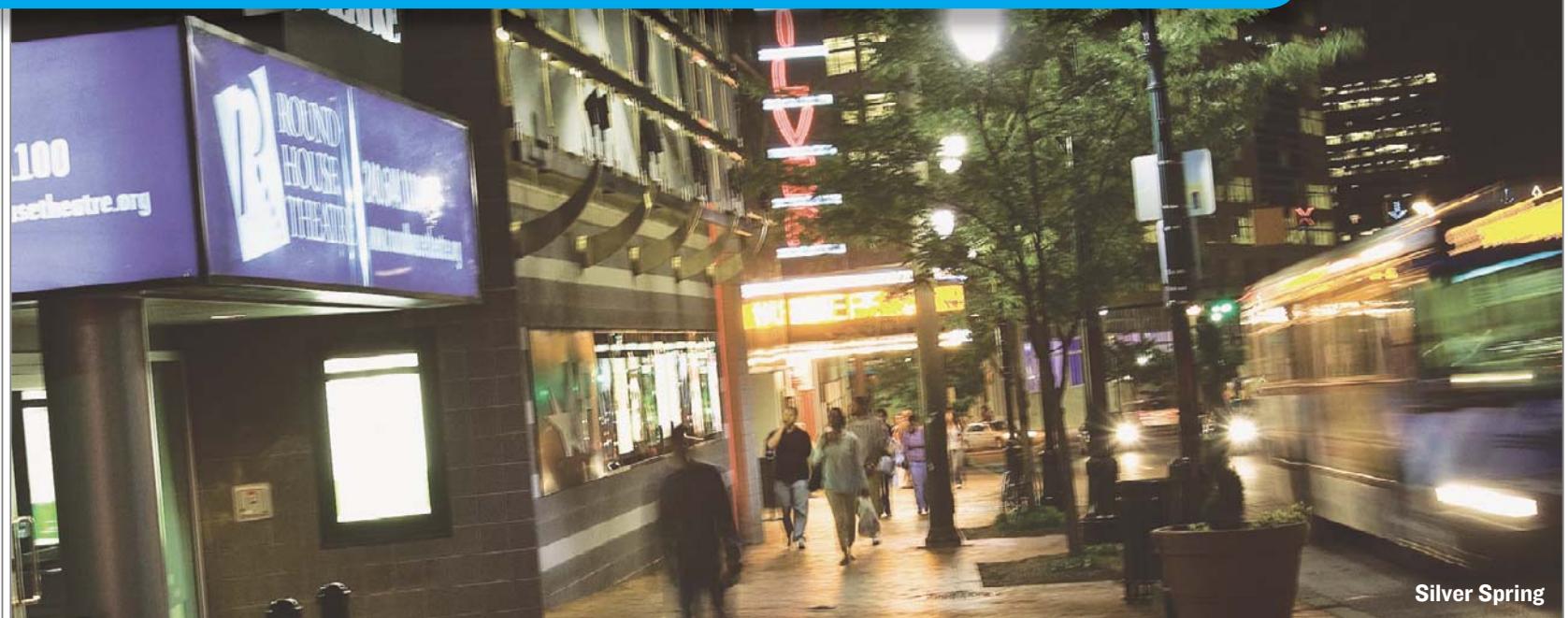
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This Party Rocks

D.C.'s Slickee Boys regroup for their annual reunion gigs

MUSIC | First things first: Are the Slickee Boys a broken-up band that gets back together on a regular basis, or are they a going concern that doesn't play out that much?

"I guess I'd have to say we officially broke up in '91," says frontman Mark Noone. "Because we actually did our final show at the 9:30 Club in '91." (Note to younger readers: This was when the 9:30 really was at 930 F St. NW, which is now probably home to an office complex. The old club was dank, dark, sweaty, smelly, vermin-friendly, human-hostile and really kinda awesome.)

The Slickees split on good terms, though, so more or less every year around the end of the year, they've taken to the stage to crank up barn-burners like "This Party Sucks," "Escalator 66" and "When I Go to the Beach." (Further note to younger readers: This was back when the beach was, chronologically speaking, closer to D.C., and a trip there could be arranged so as to afford more time frolicking in the surf than pounding your head against the part of your steering wheel where the airbag now comes out.)

"Beach" was an MTV favorite back in the station's early days, when indie and unsigned bands could score national exposure by placing well on "The Basement Tapes." (Final note to younger readers — we promise: MTV, which stands for "Music Television," once played music videos on television, not on your computer. Commerce aside,

→ **RAGING STYLE:**
Slickee Boys singer Mark Noone has aged like a good Scotch, if a good Scotch had a thing for kicky accessories.

the idea behind these promotional shorts was to be fun and goofy and advance the thesis that being in a band was a good way to enjoy oneself, not merely a credible excuse for establishing a MySpace page.)

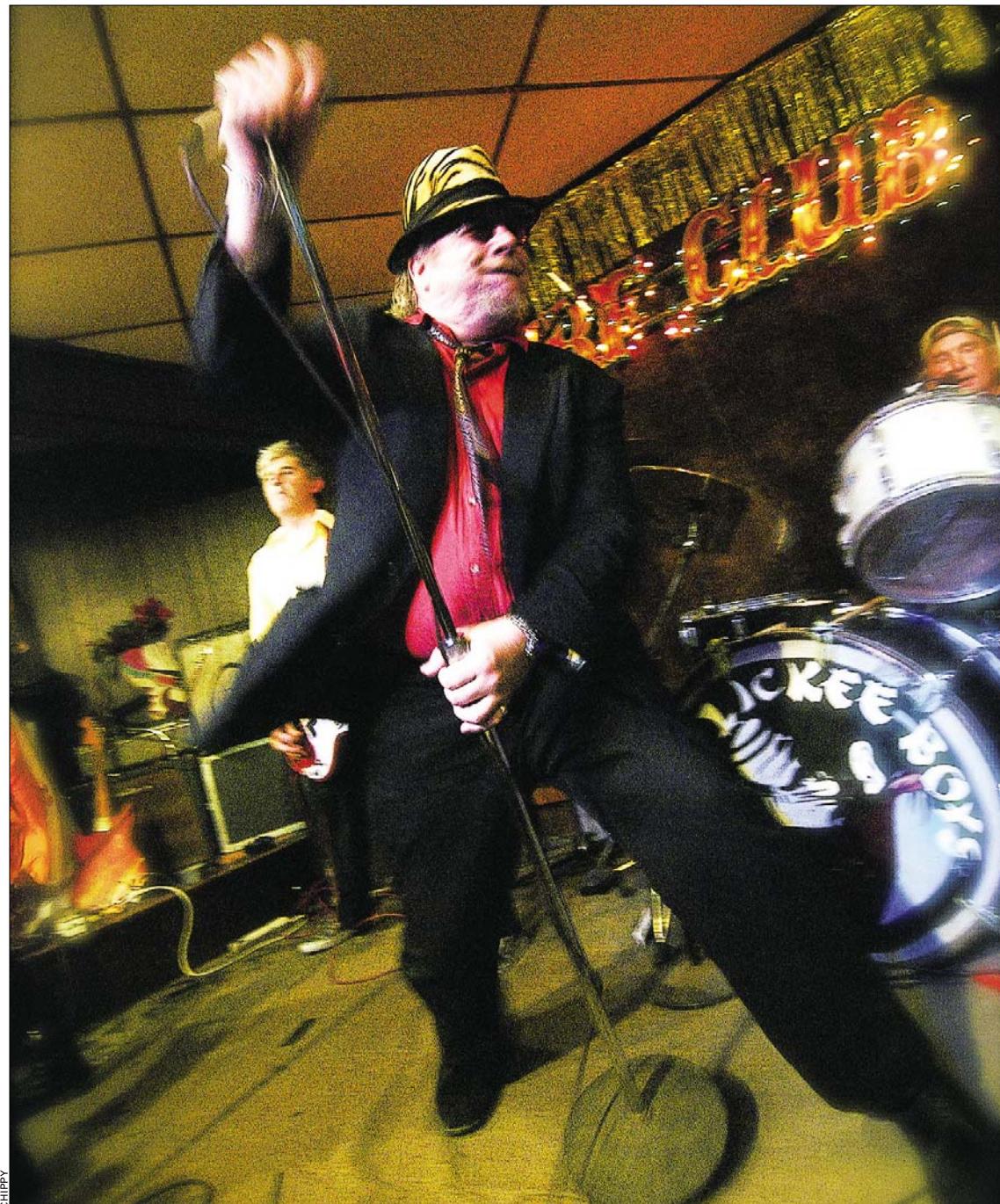
The song also was a local fave, thanks in part to the support of WHFS. (Sorry, call us untrustworthy: 'HFS was a radio station that, before it played Blink-182 all the time, played Stone Temple Pilots all the time, but long before that played pretty much anything the DJ felt like playing. So you could hear '70s Eno right next to '80s new wave on a station that wasn't run by

More or less every year, the Slickees take to the stage to crank up their legendary barn-burners.

mouthbreathing college kids and which didn't fade out if you drove a block away from the transmitter.)

"There's a couple of people around that are responsible for that fact that I can still make a living making music," Noone says. In addition to Weasel, the onetime 'HFS afternoon-drive-time DJ with a voice that could cut glass, Noone credits club DJ Chaz Powers with getting crowds hyped to the Slickee sound.

An uncategorizable, high-energy blend of pop, art-punk and new wave, with elements of rockabilly, surf, garage and psychedelia cour-



tesy of guitarists Marshall Keith and Kim Kane, the Slickees' music drew everyone from dance-party girls to hardcore boys.

Although he joined 30 years ago, Noone was a newcomer to a band that had already been gigging steadily. Named for the Korean war orphans Kane had encountered as a foreign-service brat, the Slickee Boys were an act Noone loved before he signed on.

"I saw that they had an ad in the old *Unicorn Times* looking for a singer," he says. The outgoing vocalist was Martha Hull, whose current band, Ottley!, shares the bill at Surf Club Live. Lucky for Noone, he could sing a lot of the songs in the same key as Hull; still, his hiring wasn't a foregone conclusion.

"It was a lot harder than I thought it was gonna be. They were pretty scrutinizing. After maybe three or four or five auditions, they decided to keep me."

Over the years, more than a dozen musicians have filled the ranks, but getting a full lineup back together is decidedly non-trivial.

"Mike Maxwell, who's the bass player, lives in San Francisco, and Giles [Cook], who's the drummer, lives somewhere up in Northern Maryland. And Kim is in Damascus, and Marshall's up near Frederick," says Noone, who lives in Takoma Park. "So we also gotta make sure that we can make enough money for [Maxwell] to cover his tickets. And unfortunately, that's usually what he gets. He just gets his tick-

ets covered. ... He's doing it for the love of it."

And really that's what's at stake for the Slickees and their fans. Noone still gets excited about getting out in front of players who can do justice to the sounds in his head. "It's really good to be able to have a band to play your song the way you intended it when you were writing it," he says. "That's a real luxury."

GLENN DIXON

→ *Surf Club Live*, 4711 Kenilworth Ave., Hyattsville; with Ottley!, Monsters from the Surf, Sat., 9 p.m., \$15; 301-927-6310.

→ *Ottobar*, 2549 N. Howard St., Baltimore; with Chelsea Graveyard, the Screams at Midnight, the Diamondheads, Fri., 10 p.m., \$15; 410-662-0069.



HIPSTERS DON'T DANCE: Aside from the Dance Party, not many local bands would write songs with titles like "Sex Disco."

Shaking It Up

The Dance Party brings much-needed fun to the D.C. scene

LOCAL HEROES | If you've never heard the Prince George's County power pop quintet the Dance Party, you should know they didn't pick their name to be ironic. They really do want people to dance and party, as evidenced by their wild shows and goofy song titles like "Sex Disco" and "New Wave Drugz." In other cities, such a hedonistic musical approach might seem passé, but in the earnest D.C. scene, their rowdiness has made them stand out.

"I think around here there's been a kind of idea that music is very serious," says lead singer Mick Coogan. "There's lots of post-punk going on and political-minded bands. We found that there are a lot of people

“We’ve done the DIY thing. It worked really well in D.C., but we’re gonna try to take our music to more people. That’s our goal.”

that just want to come to a show, let their hair down, get loose and party backstage — and just go crazy."

After several years of gigs, an EP and an indie album, the Dance Party now finds itself in the position of trying to appeal to the rest of the world. To that end, they recorded a cache of songs with engineer-to-the-stars Andros Rodriguez, who took to the band after hearing them

play in Brooklyn.

"We spent about eight months on this record and came out with ten songs," Coogan explains. "We rerecorded some songs from our last record ('Friction! Friction! Friction!') but with higher production values and more attention to detail."

Coogan says the Cars-influenced group will spend time around the holidays jetting off to New York and Los Angeles to showcase the new material in front of industry suits: "We've done the DIY thing. It worked really well in D.C., but we're gonna try to take our music to more people. That's our goal."

TONY SCLAFANI

→ 9:30 Club, 815 V St. NW; with New Rock Church of Fire, Crash Boom Bang, Sat., 8 p.m., \$15; 800-955-5566. (U St.-Cardozo)

The Bard At His Bardiest

A new 'Twelfth Night' gathers Shakespeare Theatre's comedy vets

STAGE | One might call "Twelfth Night" the quintessential Shakespeare comedy: a shipwreck! Twins! Cross-dressing! A wise fool!

So it makes sense that Shakespeare Theatre has assembled some of its most veteran performers for its holiday staging of the play, which runs at Sidney Harman Hall through Jan. 4.

After her shipwreck on the shores of Illyria, separated from her twin brother, Sebastian (Peter Katona), Viola (Samantha Soule) disguises herself as "Cesario" and takes a position serving Duke Orsino (Christopher Innvar). Her immediate affection for him is tempered by her duty: to win the mourning Olivia (Veanne Cox) for Orsino.

Olivia takes a liking to "Cesario" and begins a pursuit most easily comparable to Pepe Le Pew's. Meanwhile, Orsino also begins to feel strangely attached to "Cesario."



CAROL ROSEGG
Samantha Soule plays the cross-dressing Viola in "Twelfth Night."

And then Sebastian turns up alive and in Illyria.

The play begins with an ethereal image: Viola suspended high above the stage, floating in sheer fabric lit in blue, made to represent the character lost at sea. The display foretells director Rebecca Bayla Taichman's use of colorful images on the massive stage; roses dominate the stage in Act II, signifying the characters' increasing ardor.

By keeping the visuals uncomplicated, however, Taichman allows her insanely skilled cast to excel.

ERIN TROMPETER

→ Sidney Harman Hall, 610 F St. NW; through Jan. 4, \$23.50-\$79.75; 202-547-1122 shakespearetheatre.org. (Gallery Place-Chinatown)

GALLERY | PAINTER PAINTING



COURTESY RANDALL SCOTT GALLERY

MIXED MEDIA: Is it a painting or is it a photograph? It's hard to tell with "Quasi-Painting," featuring works by some of the area's best young artists, including this work by Nikki Painter (is that a giveaway to her medium of choice?). The exhibit is on display at Randall Scott Gallery through Jan. 10.

Setting The Stage

Theodore Bikel pays tribute to the writer Sholem Aleichem

STAGE | For Theodore Bikel, the one-man show about 19th-century Yiddish writer Sholem Aleichem, whose stories were the basis for the musical "Fiddler on the Roof," was a long time coming.

"Sholem Aleichem has been part of my life all my life," Bikel says. "When I was a small boy, my father read his poems in Yiddish aloud to us, and I was always reading him, thinking about him and getting the humor of his humor."

But after performing in Sholem Aleichem's "Tevye the Milkman," the inspiration for "Fiddler," Bikel realized Americans didn't know anything else the author wrote.

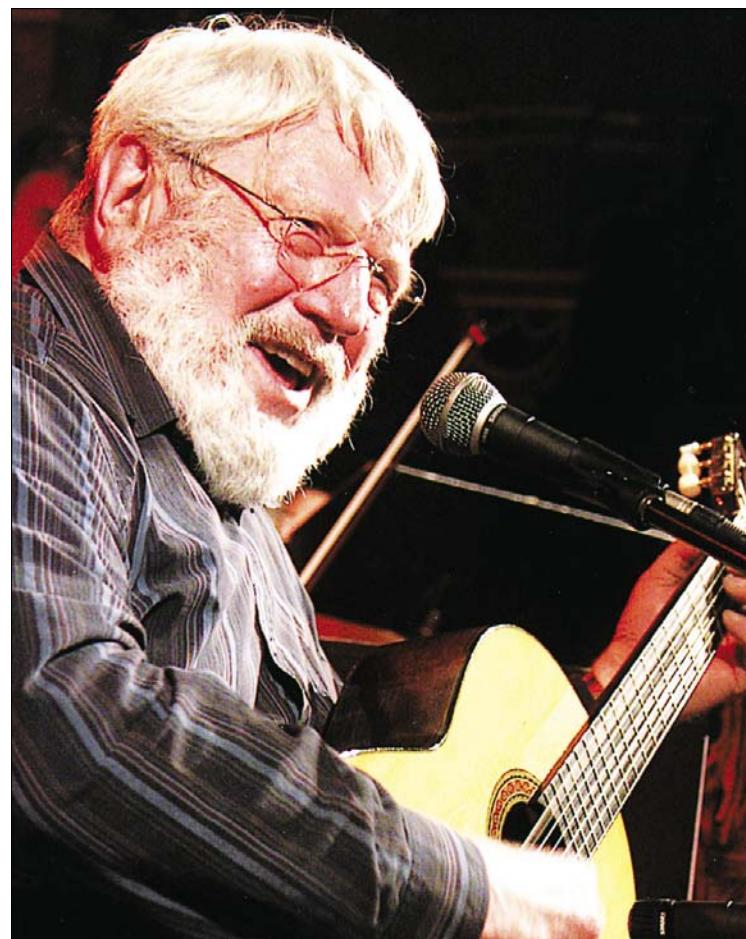
"It's only one small portion of

what he wrote," Bikel says, so he decided to write a play about Sholem Aleichem's life to change that. And "Sholem Aleichem: Laughter Through Tears," on stage at the D.C. Jewish Community Center's Theater J, does just that.

Bikel, 84, plays Sholem Aleichem at the end of his life, as he is writing his will. The performance combines story, music and song, and Bikel is accompanied by Tamara Brooks on piano and accordionist Merima Kljuco.

To research the piece, Bikel used Sholem Aleichem's collected works, which fill 18 volumes, his correspondence and a biography. He also used Sholem Aleichem's unique autobiography, written in third person.

Bikel, who was born in Vienna and lives in Los Angeles, has had a varied and successful career. He's



COURTESY THEATER J

DECades in the Making: "Laughter Through Tears" is Bikel's first one-man show.

best known for playing Tevye in the Broadway production of "Fiddler on the Roof," and he has performed

in numerous films (including "My Fair Lady"). Bikel has also recorded more than 20 albums of folk songs,

To research the piece, Bikel studied all 18 volumes of the author's work.

but he hasn't had much trouble balancing his many talents.

"I have done this all my life; balanced theater, film, television, music," he says, "What you do is compartmentalize — don't do things halfway. I go at everything I do as if it were the only thing that I did."

This is Bikel's first one-man show, but he's ready for the challenges that presents.

"When you do a play, there are places and whole scenes where other people talk," he says, "I don't have that luxury. I have to, in a sense, take people by the hand and carry them with me into a world where I want them to go and see things that I see in my mind's eye."

AMY CAVANAUGH

→ Washington DCJCC, 1529 16th St. NW; through Jan. 11, \$30-\$55, half price for patrons 25 and under; 800-494-8497, washingtondcjcc.org. (Dupont Circle)

Join the So-Called Fun

Artist Franz West is looking for players, not just for viewers

ROAD TRIP | At a time when museums are under the gun — driven ever harder to beef up outreach and increase their audience beyond hardcore cognoscenti — Franz West is a curator's dream.

The Viennese artist is all about participation; his sculpture has a performance-art pedigree. His 30-odd-year retrospective, "To Build a House You Start With the Roof," opens with an invitation to sit on the stools that sprout like serifs from the towering, ligature-ish loops of "The Ego and the Id."

Nearby are several "Adaptives," lumpy masses on stalks of rebar you can swing around like a master of some occult martial art designed to



COURTESY BMA

YOU GAME? West's Baltimore Museum of Art show is relentlessly participatory.

render its practitioners too ridiculous to attack.

Later you can recline on a couch and read the day's paper. Taking a break with the Jumble? You're also taking part.

There's a nasty, thwarting undercurrent to all this activity, however. All of "Couch," including its pillows, is hard, unyielding metal. When West places his audience on a pedestal, it's never with-

out a degree of mockery. The most important function of the wall text, in fact, is to show you what you can touch and what you can't.

What West is after is play (defined by its lack of utility) without pleasure (aka fun, normally the purpose of otherwise purposeless play). But with a solid measure of polymorphous perversity.

The most family-paper-oriented thing that can be said of three large outdoor sculptures is that they refer to various forms of bodily extrusion. They are jokes about waste.

It's no accident that West's mythological mascot is Sisyphus, damned to the unceasing folly of a humiliating endeavor that — if you have the cruelty of a Greek god — you might as well call a game.

GLENN DIXON

R&B | ONE MORE GIFT



COURTESY INTERSCOPE

BOYS, BOYS, BOYS: Sweet-voiced singer Robin Thicke tells the ladies he loves them at DAR Constitution Hall on Saturday. With Thicke, Eric Benet and Terrence Howard each doing the seduction work of five men, this post-Christmas show should sustain the holiday feeling of good will.

→ Baltimore Museum of Art, 10 Art Museum Drive, Baltimore, Md.; museum closed Thursday, through Jan. 4; free; 443-573-1700, artbma.org.

Electro's Unchained Elodie

An alluring chanteuse waves a time- and genre-defying spell

MUSIC | "I think I'm extremely stubborn," said Elodie over the phone in a breathy, pliable voice.

The Franco-electro chanteuse who spells her name funny (elodie0, technically) is gearing up for her Washington debut at DC9 on Friday night. She emerged from the nouveau "Nublu" music scene pumping through the veins of New York's Bowery.

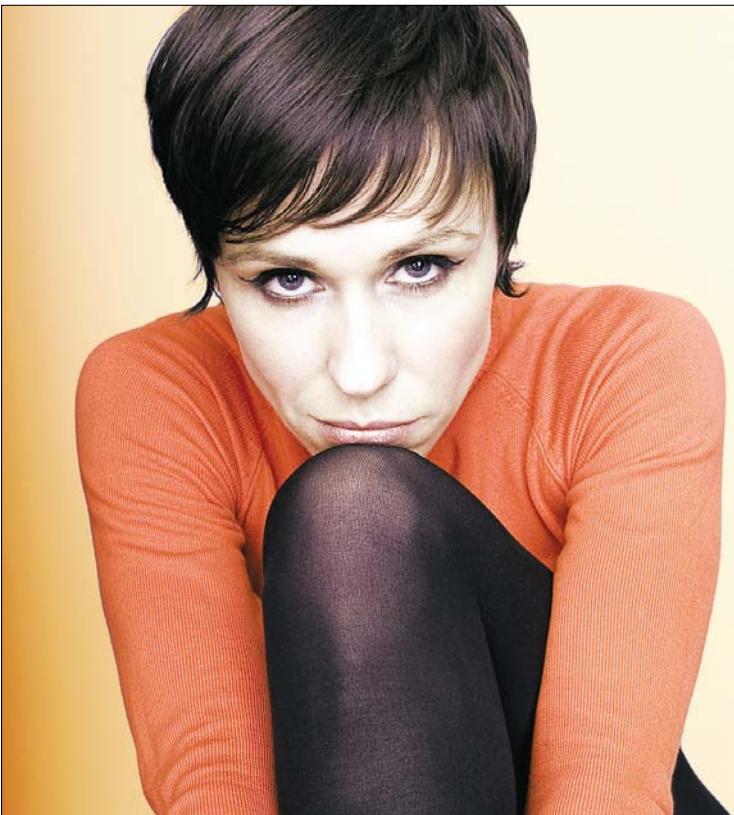
Imagine Bjork with tinges of Billie Holliday and a soupcon of Teutonic chanteuse Nico, and you'll approximate her musical mien. Elodie's first album, "Stubborn" (Mulatta Records), featuring collaborations with Jesse Murphy and Aaron Johnston of the Brazilian Girls, is percolated by original ambient electronic ripples and meaty vocals that suggest '60s-era adolescence pop. (The presence of Boris Persikoff as co-producer

didn't hurt.)

"It's a general theme of the album, but also, stubborn represents me pretty well," she said. Elodie has built a following of devotees starving for a new theater of warbly synth-rock.

"I think my music is theatrical. I'm a trained dancer, including taking jazz as a kid," she said. "But my father was always bringing me new music to listen to. And when I was 18, I got into French rock 'n' roll songs. It was great for me. I loved '60s music. And then I tried Middle Eastern rock, music from every genre. I remember being so moved by Billie Holliday, Max Roach, early Herbie Hancock. And, of course, showtunes."

Citing America as the land of not just music, but a creative musical frontier rife with possibility, sparked Elodie's interest in jazz and musicals. After a stint as an actress in the theater, she realized her true calling was not to be a thespian, but to take the lessons of the stage into the



COURTESY PRESS HERE PUBLICITY

THE PAST ISN'T EVEN PAST: With the silky seduction of cabaret, the inventiveness of Bjork and the icy command of Nico, Elodie locates the cool in all her music.

nightclubs.

"Musical theater is an art form that's stuck," she said. "I remember when I was growing up watching movie musicals, how they were so influential to me, as naïve as they were they were wonderful. It's all Disney now. It's all so commercial."

Elodie studied musical theater in high school and attended college for drama; the road to the pop stage has been a long and certainly arduous one. But it led to composing and thinking like a theatrical performer.

"This is my first solo project of its kind, so I am having an exciting time," she added. "My background is strange: First, I'm a dancer. Then came the music. Then came the writing even later still. Now comes the fun part."

CHRISTOPHER CORREA

→ DC9, 1940 9th St., NW; with Ole, DJ Cassidy, Sun., 9:30 p.m., \$10; 202-483-5000, dcnine.com. (U St.-Cardozo)

Pasadena Gives It Up for Md.

Hard-rock Maryland boosters find there's no place like home

MUSIC | If you're not from Pasadena, you probably don't know where it is. But six local boys who love Maryland and music named their eclectic hardcore band Pasadena.

Pasadena is making waves in the Baltimore music scene with its cool sound, laced with trumpets, guitar riffs and even some rapping alongside the infectious vocals of lead singer, guitarist and co-founder Joey Harkum. Its sound evokes bands like 311, Sublime and even a little Linkin Park, minus the synthesizers.

The band started in 2001 as the brainchild of Harkum and drummer Ben Cowdery, and became a serious endeavor in 2004. By that time,



COURTESY PASADENA

The six-piece band from the greater Baltimore region carries on a '90s musical style.

guitarist Will Finely, bassist Aaron Hooper, trumpeter Geoff Burroughs and Matthew Richey, who contributes, as he claims, "rhymes," had joined. Seven years after its concep-

tion, Pasadena released its debut, "Sick and Tired," to a crazy crowd at a launch party. The 12-track CD was a real undertaking for a group at ease onstage trying to capture live

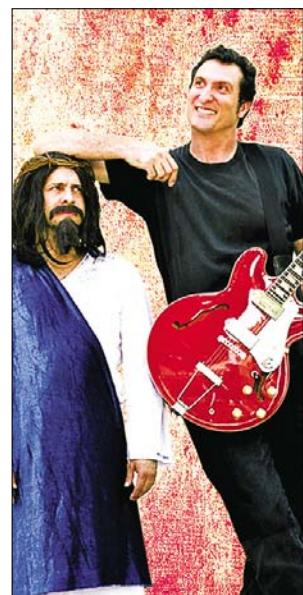
energy on disc.

"We usually just try to have a really good time. We come from a party atmosphere because that's where our music originated," said Hooper. "At the end of most of our shows, we play a song called 'Pasadena Family,' and we invite all the fans to come onstage, so there'll be, like, 30 or 40 people up onstage. It's just a good way to get everyone involved and really meet the fans."

In the New Year, Pasadena has three goals for their growing ensemble: "Be rich and famous, get out of debt, and make the band a profitable venture." Because music fans don't double as currency. ADAORA OTIJI

→ Sonar, 407 E. Saratoga St., Baltimore; with Flight's Kool, Minlus, McCracken, the Scarborough Sideshow; Sat., 8:30 p.m., \$10; 410-783-7888.

VARIETY | HOLIDAY JEER



COURTESY SEAN ALTMAN

ON OFFENSE: Sean Altman's "Jewmongous" is a one-man variety show with holiday themes that baits Jew and gentile alike. So leave your thin skin at the door and get ready to rock at Jammin' Java on Christmas Eve.

WeekendPass

Entertainment

The Doctor Is In Love

Web phenomenon 'Dr. Horrible' sings of world domination

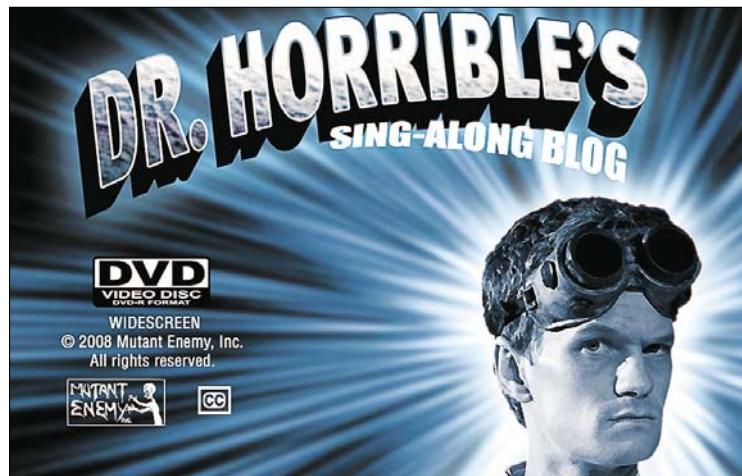
DVD | The Whedon parents should write a parenting book. They raised three boys who not only play well together, but who are all uniquely talented. Joss created the television shows "Buffy the Vampire Slayer" and "Firefly" and commands legions of devoted minions. Jed writes songs whose catchiness can be downright sinister, and Zack produces, sings, acts, writes and does pretty much everything else.

They've joined forces to unleash their own doomsday device, a web show called "Dr. Horrible's Sing-along Blog," and its release on DVD (exclusive from Amazon.com) could

very well spell the end of humanity. It is, of course, a musical.

An antidote to the recent glut of overserious comic book movies, "Dr. Horrible" follows an up-and-coming villain (Neil Patrick Harris, master of the dark art of comedy) whose bent social conscience motivates his plans to conquer the world. In his way stands superhero Captain Hammer (Nathan Fillion, extravagantly cheesy), a big-chinned lug who brainlessly upholds the status quo. The Whedons ask you to root for the bad guy in his white lab coat and against the hero in his slimming black T-shirt as they do battle for the heart of pretty Penny (Felicia Day).

"Dr. Horrible" has what "The Dark Knight" sorely lacked: showtunes. Jed crafts songs that are men-



COURTESY BOOKSURGE

Neil Patrick Harris throws himself into the role of a mad doctor with secret desires.

acingly hummable and surprisingly complex. "My Freeze Ray" and "A Man's Gotta Do" simultaneously parody the corniness of musicals

while sincerely expressing the characters' conflicted emotions, all while wheedling into your head.

And to ensure your fate is suffi-

'Dr. Horrible'
has what 'The
Dark Knight'
sorely lacked:
showtunes.

ciently sealed, the Whedon brothers have tricked out the DVD with the most nefarious extras imaginable, like "Commentary! The Musical," at whose feet all other DVD commentaries tremble.

There's a conventional making-of that explains "Dr. Horrible's" origins in the recent writers' strike, but who cares? Skip directly to the "Evil League of Evil" application videos, in which viewers invent their own supervillains (such as L'Enfant Terrible and Calamitous Orphan) and sing their own songs. The Whedons may inspire devotion in their fans, but they also simply inspire them. We're all doomed.

STEPHEN M. DEUSNER

Take 10

THE WASHINGTON POST'S FILM CRITICS
TACKLE THIS WEEK'S BOX-OFFICE TOP 10

1 | Yes Man

"Yes Man" doesn't have a plot; it has a premise. And Jim Carrey's shtick feels dated. DAN ZAK

2 | Seven Pounds

Despite the mystery of its title, the movie is pretty unabashed about its sentiment: Each of us has something to give. MICHAEL O'SULLIVAN

3 | The Tale of Despereaux

It's a movie that simply has too much of everything, except a storytelling technique that grabs kids. In the end, it's aesthetically charmed but dramatically inert. JOHN ANDERSON

4 | The Day the Earth Stood Still

Solemn, sober and efficient, this cautionary science-fiction remake gets the job done and moves on.

ANN HORNADAY

5 | Four Christmases

There's a good movie here underneath the baloney and ham, but we



MELISSA MOSELEY

A BIG SHTICK: Jim Carrey, center, is at it again as the rubber-faced hero of "Yes Man."

never get much of a taste. DAN ZAK

6 | Twilight

The film makes the human-vampire love affair convincing by finding the flesh-and-blood humanity in Bella and Edward. MICHAEL O'SULLIVAN

7 | Bolt

As sprightly and determined as its yappy lead, this new Disney animated film works hard to be all things to all people, with mixed results. DAN KOIS

8 | Slumdog Millionaire

In this Dickensian fable, the coal dust of Victorian England has been

replaced by the computer-screen glow of a country in the throes of a profound economic and cultural change.

ANN HORNADAY

9 | Australia

This wildly ambitious, luridly indulgent spectacle of romance, action, melodrama and historic revisionism genuflects toward old-school Hollywood schmaltz. ANN HORNADAY

10 | Quantum of Solace

Daniel Craig stars in the newest and most joyless installment of one of cinema's most venerable franchises.

ANN HORNADAY

Indies&Arties

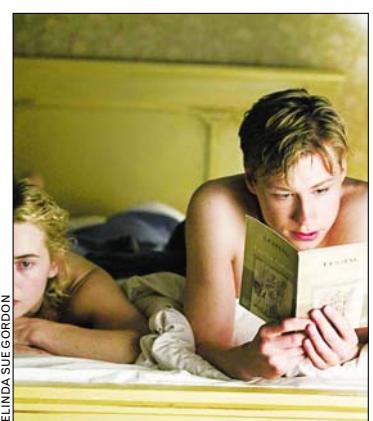
The Lean Years

As part of its retrospective of epicist David Lean's early films, the National Gallery of Art is showing a restored version of his early musical adaptation, "Oliver Twist." It captures the grubby spirit of Charles Dickens' novel (Lean had also adapted "Great Expectations" for the screen), but Alec Guinness' portrayal of Fagin led to controversy over perceived anti-Semitism — the film was even banned in Israel and edited for U.S. audiences.

→ NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART, 4TH STREET & CONSTITUTION AVENUE NW; FRI., 2:30 P.M.; SAT. 12:30 P.M., FREE; 202-737-4215, NGA.GOV. (ARCHIVES-NAVY MEMORIAL)

Still 'Wonderful'

AFI's No. 1 most inspiring movie of all time, "It's a Wonderful Life," plays one last time this year on Christmas Day at AFI Silver at 8:45 p.m. The film will likely be all over the television, but why not see it on the big screen, where it was originally a flop when released in 1946? Of course, this alternately acid, dour and sappy moviemaking miracle has been making up for its early stumble by inspiring audiences seasonally for more than 60 years.



MELINDA SUE GORDON
Kate Winslet and David Kross are lovers caught in history in "The Reader."

→ AFI SILVER, 8633 COLESVILLE ROAD, SILVER SPRING; THU., 3 & 8:45 P.M.; 301-495-6700, AFI.COM/SILVER. (SILVER SPRING)

The Reader'

"The Reader" is a buzz-generating drama about a German teenager (David Kross) who falls in love with a woman (Kate Winslet) after she nurses him back to health from scarlet fever. But years later, the boy observes a Nazi war crime trial, and is shocked to find his caring nurse is the defendant — and it's not her only secret. "The Reader" is one in a strange new sub-genre of films about sympathetic Nazis. See it and decide for yourself. → AREA THEATERS, OPENS THU.



1 What, No 'Chess'?

What's better than "Cats"? Multiple selections of music from the made-for-the-stage repertoire of Andrew Lloyd Webber, complete with visuals. The Kennedy Center salutes the Broadway king with "The Music of Andrew Lloyd Webber" through Jan. 4.

→ **Kennedy Center**, 2700 F St. NW; \$25-\$150; 202-467-4600, kennedy.center.org. (Foggy Bottom-GWU)

2 Not Quite the North Pole

Blistery weather making you feel like you're in Scandinavia? You can get the full experience of a Norwegian

4 Christmas without getting on a plane as Union Station celebrates "A Norwegian Christmas" with concerts, displays and events.

→ **Union Station**, 50 Massachusetts Ave. NE; through Jan. 4 (closed Thu. & Fri this weekend); 202-289-1908, unionstationdc.com. (Union Station)



5 Holiday Jam

Celebrate the holidays—and local music—with the roots-rock Billy Coulter, David Kitchen (pictured, for whom this show doubles as a CD release party) and bluesy singer Janine Wilson at Iota Friday for a second annual Rockin' Homegrown Holiday. All of them are local and all of them will put the popcorn garland on your season.

→ **Iota**, 2832 Wilson Blvd., Arlington; Fri., 9 p.m., \$10; 703-522-8340, iotaclubandcafe.com. (Clarendon)



2 Little Kids; Big Noise

The inspiration for Jack Black's hit movie, Paul Green's School of Rock gets kids onstage *really* play "rock band." On Saturday, check out some of the best the school has to offer.

→ **Ned Devine's Irish Village**, 21800 Town Center Plaza, Sterling; Sat., 6 p.m., \$10; 703-850-2100, schooloffrock.com/concerts.

3 Internationalists



Internationalists

Put that Hebrew you learned for your Bar Mitzvah to use at the Kennedy Center Friday, when Golem, the New York-based gypsy-folk-punk band belts out its tunes in Yiddish, Ladino and a few other Slavic languages.

→ **Kennedy Center**, 2700 F St. NW; Fri., 6 p.m., free; 202-467-4600 or 800-444-1324, kennedy-center.org. (Foggy Bottom-GWU)



2 Sound

→ WEDNESDAY

Jammin' Java: Jewmongous, 7 p.m., \$17-\$20.

Kennedy Center, Millennium Stage: Monumental Brass Quintet, 6 p.m., free.

→ THURSDAY

DC9: "XXXMasTaint," dance party 9 p.m., \$5.

Kennedy Center, Millennium Stage: All-Star Jazz Jam, 6 p.m., free.

Kennedy Center: The Music of Andrew Lloyd Webber, 7:30 p.m., \$65-\$110.

→ FRIDAY

9:30 Club: State Radio, Lionize, 8 p.m., \$18.

Birchmere: New Potato Caboose, the Bridge, 7:30 p.m., \$25.

Black Cat: "Holiday Hangover" 9 p.m., free. "No Control," 9:30 p.m., free.

Blues Alley: Ahmad Jamal, 8 & 10 p.m., \$40.

DC9: "Liberation" dance party, 9 p.m., \$6.

Iota: Janine Wilson, Billy Coulter, David Kitchen, 9 p.m., \$10.

Jammin' Java: The Friday Night Boys, the Bigger Lights, Mercy Mercedes, 4:30 & 8:30 p.m., \$15.

Kennedy Center, Millennium Stage: Golem, 6 p.m., free.

Kennedy Center: The Music of Andrew Lloyd Webber, 1:30 p.m., \$85.

Rock and Roll Hotel: The Petticoat Tea Room, 9:30 p.m., \$10.

Twins Jazz: Anderson Twins Jazz Quintet, 9 & 11 p.m., \$15.

→ SATURDAY

Birchmere: Hank Williams Tribute with Cathy Fink & Marcy Marxer, Bill Kirchen, Robin & Linda Williams and Their Fine Group, 7:30 p.m., \$29.50.

Black Cat: Olivia Mancini & the Terrible Two, Tereu Tereu, Revival, 9 p.m., \$10. "Bliss" dance party, 9:30 p.m., \$7.

DC9: The Spring Standards, Elizabeth & the Catapult, 9:30 p.m., \$10.

Iota: Fools & Horses, Monoco, the Bails, 9 p.m., \$10.

Jammin' Java: Above the Ashes, Not Liable, Shrine of the Silver Monkey, Cab Ride Home, Guardians of Iridescence, 4:30 p.m., \$10-\$12. The Ultimate MC Challenge II, 10 p.m., \$10-\$12.

Continued on E10



2 Little Kids; Big Noise

"A CAUSE FOR CELEBRATION" THIS HOLIDAY SEASON!

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BEST ACTOR SEAN PENN • BEST SUPPORTING ACTOR JOSH BROLIN
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WINNER • BEST ACTOR • SEAN PENN

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SOUTHEASTERN FILM CRITICS ASSOCIATION • HOUSTON FILM CRITICS SOCIETY • DALLAS-FORT WORTH FILM CRITICS ASSOCIATION • PHOENIX FILM CRITICS SOCIETY
ST. LOUIS FILM CRITICS ASSOCIATION • AUSTIN FILM CRITICS ASSOCIATION • ALLIANCE OF WOMEN FILM JOURNALISTS

WINNER • BEST DIRECTOR • GUS VAN SANT

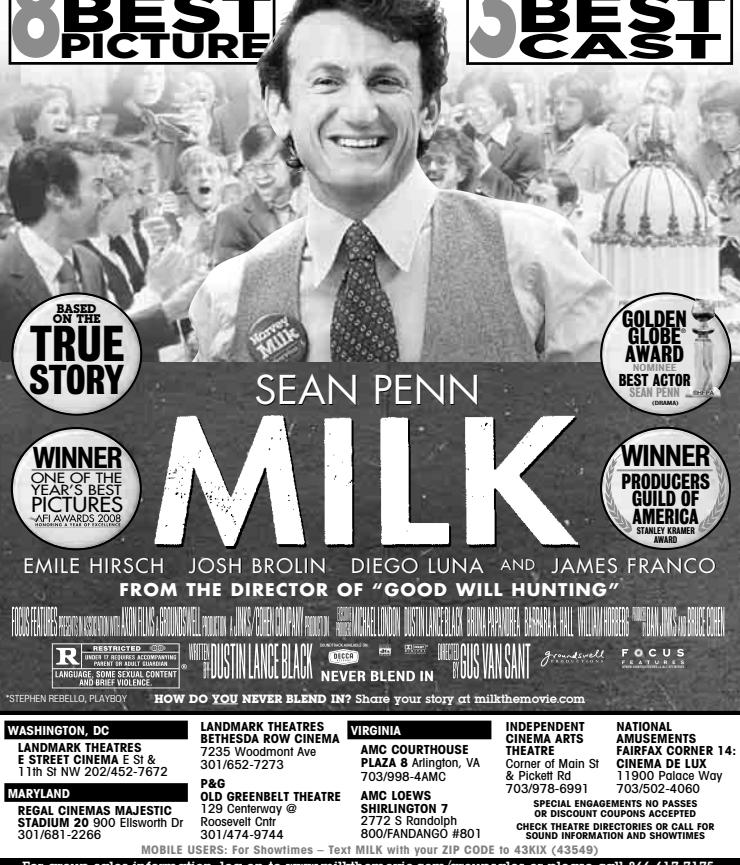
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E10 | EXPRESS | 12.24.2008 | WEDNESDAY

WeekendPass | Entertainment

TheScene

Continued from E9

Kennedy Center: The Music of Andrew Lloyd Webber, 1:30 & 7:30 p.m., \$65-\$110.

The Red & the Black: Stefan Alexander, Paul Barrios (CD release) 9 p.m., \$8.

Rock and Roll Hotel: The After Christmas, New Year's Eve Warm-Up Holiday Party, 9 p.m., \$5, free before 10 p.m.

State Theatre: Soja, 5 & 9 p.m., \$20-\$25.

→ SUNDAY

9:30 Club: Soulive, 7 p.m., \$20.

Black Cat: J. Marinelli, Stewart Lupton, George Karos, 9 p.m., \$8.

DC9: Elodie, DJ Ole, DJ Cassidy, 8:30 p.m., \$10.

Iota: Will Thomas Band, Dan Sheridan, 8:30 p.m., \$10.

Jammin' Java: Tom O'Connor, Brent Shuttleworth, 2 p.m., \$8. Jonasay, Trustfall, 7:30 p.m., \$12.

Kennedy Center: The Music of Andrew Lloyd Webber, 1:30 & 7:30 p.m., \$60-\$110.

Velvet Lounge: The Makeupbreakup, 9 p.m., \$8.



Funnier Than A Snowball Fight

→ **LOOKING FOR SOMETHING** to do with your relatives that doesn't involve crowded malls, fruitcake or a Reese Witherspoon holiday-rom-com? The Washington Improv Theater presents iMusical, the holiday show that takes an audience suggestion and instantly delivers an improvised musical. It's the perfect recipe for comedy, says iMusical creator and director Travis Ploeger, who provides piano accompaniment onstage. "All of the music is improvised too — it's all fresh and new," says Ploeger. "No one's heard anything before, including ourselves." Performances so far have featured such storylines as murder by skipping stones and a Dungeons & Dragons romance. The best part, says Ploeger, is getting to be a part of something truly exclusive. "You can watch and enjoy with us something that's being created for the very first and last time onstage." *The Washington Improv Theater, Source Theatre, 1835 14th St. NW; 202-204-7800. (U St.-Cardozo) SUAMEDHA SOOD*

Sight

Most museums and galleries are closed on Dec. 25, and many more will have unusual hours. Please call before heading out.

Aaron Gallery: "19th Annual Small & Miniature Show," through Dec. 31. 1717 Connecticut Ave. NW; 202-234-3311, aaron-gallerydc.com.

Addison/Ripley: "New Paintings," work by Edith Kuhnle, through Jan. 10. 1670 Wisconsin Ave. NW; 202-338-5180, addisonripleyfineart.com.

Alexandria Black History Museum: "Childhood Memories in Miniature: African American Dollhouses," miniatures by Sharon J. Frazier and Linwood M. Smith, through Jan. 24. 902 Wythe St., Alexandria; 703-838-4356.

American Association for the Advancement of Science: "Science

Covers and Sculptures," original artwork appearing on the cover of Science magazine and science-based sculpture, through Jan. 9. 12th & H streets NW; 202-326-6400, aaas.org.

LAST CHANCE American University

Katzen Arts: "Jae Ko: Ten Year Retrospective," through Sun. "Invasion '68:

Prague," photographs by Josef Koudelka of the 1968 Soviet occupation of the

Czech city, through Sun. "Jack Boul," scaled prints, drawings and paintings by the former AU professor, through Sun. "Dalya Luttwak," welded metal sculptures by the Israeli artist, through Jan. 18. Katzen Arts Center, 4400 Massachusetts Ave. NW; 202-885-2787.

Arlington Arts Center: "Unlimited Edition," a juried show of works in large, unnumbered editions, through Jan. 17.

venues

→ **9:30 CLUB:** 815 V ST. NW; 202-265-093, 930.COM.

→ **BLACK CAT:** 1811 14TH ST. NW; 202-667-7960, BLACKCATDC.COM.

→ **BLUES ALLEY:** 1073 WISCONSIN AVE. NW; 202-337-414, BLUESALLEY.COM.

→ **DC NINE:** 1940 9TH ST. NW; 202-483-5000, DCNINE.COM.

→ **JAMMIN' JAVA:** 227 MAPLE AVENUE EAST, VIENNA, VA; 703-255-1566, JAMMINJAVA.COM.

→ **BIRCHMERE:** 3701 MT. VERNON AVE., ALEXANDRIA; 703-549-7500. BIRCHMERE.COM.

→ **KENNEDY CENTER:** 2700 F ST. NW; 202-467-4600, KENNEDY-CENTER.ORG.

→ **THE RED & THE BLACK:** 1212 H ST. NE;

202-399-3201, REDANDBLACKBAR.COM.

→ **ROCK AND ROLL HOTEL:** 1353 H ST. NE; 202-388-7625, ROCKANDROLLHOTELDC.COM.

→ **STATE THEATRE:** 220 N. WASHINGTON ST., FALLS CHURCH; 703-237-0300, THESTATETHEATRE.COM.

→ **TWINS JAZZ:** 344 U. ST. NW; 202-234-0072, TWINSJAZZ.COM.

→ **VELVET LOUNGE:** 915 U ST. NW; 202-462-3213, VELVETLOUNGEDC.COM.

The Scene

Continued from E11

contemporary.com.

Corcoran Gallery of Art: "Richard Avedon: Portraits of Power," through Jan. 25. "Wounded Cities: Photographs by Leo Rubinfien," through Feb. 16, 500 17th St. NW; 202-639-1700, corcoran.org.

Cross MacKenzie Ceramic Arts: "Suspended Still Life," ceramic wall compositions by David Hicks, through Jan. 3. 1054 31st St. NW; 202-333-7970.

DAR Museum: "Return to Toyland," This playful exhibition celebrates child-

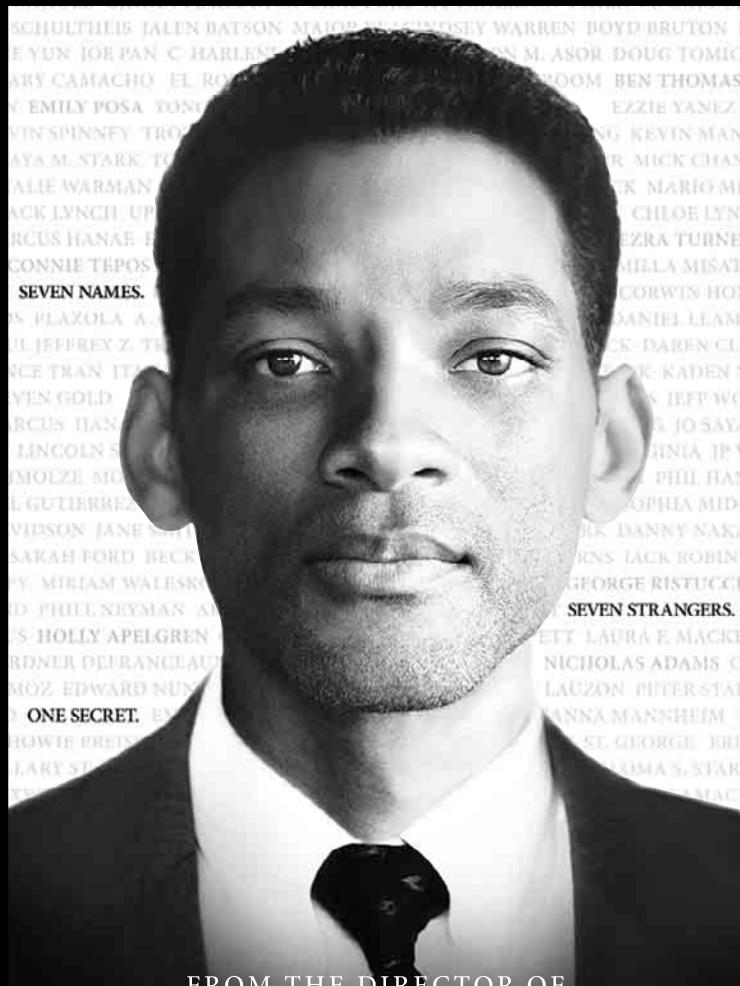
ALT-REGGAE | A SHARP LEFT



C. TAYLOR GROTHERS

POP GOES PARTISAN: The trio State Radio, playing at the 9:30 Club Friday, makes alt-rock with a bit of reggae flair. The band has ex-Dispatch member Chad Urmston as its frontman, and State Radio retains Dispatch's political leanings—the band opened for Rage Against the Machine at the Democratic National Convention earlier this year.

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ALT-REGGAE | A SHARP LEFT



C. TAYLOR GROTHERS

POP GOES PARTISAN: The trio State Radio, playing at the 9:30 Club Friday, makes alt-rock with a bit of reggae flair. The band has ex-Dispatch member Chad Urmston as its frontman, and State Radio retains Dispatch's political leanings—the band opened for Rage Against the Machine at the Democratic National Convention earlier this year.

hood of the past with late 19th- and early 20th-century toys, through Feb. 28. 1776 D St. NW; 202-879-3241.

D.C. Arts Center: "Pat Goslee: Flow," abstract paintings exploring the fine line between the physical and spiritual world, through Jan. 4. 2438 18th St. NW; 202-462-7833, dcartscenter.org.

DEA Museum: "Good Medicine, Bad Behavior: Drug Diversion in America," ongoing exhibits, through Dec. 31. 700 Army Navy Drive, Arlington; 202-307-3463, deamuseum.org.

District Fine Arts: "Sidney Lawrence — Recent Works," oil paintings and drawings, and an illustrated travel diary, through Jan. 17. 1639 Wisconsin Ave. NW;



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WeekendPass

Entertainment

The Scene

Continued from E13

H&F Fine Arts: "Suspended Cosmos"

Alan Binstock's translucent sculptures. "Life's Many Layers," layered images inspired by micro and macro worlds by Joan Belmar, both through Jan. 11. 3311 Rhode Island Ave., Mount Rainier, Md.; 301-887-0080, hffinearts.com.

Healing Arts Gallery: "Visions of Paradise: National Geographic Contemporary Masters," through Jan. 2. 1632 U St. NW; 202-483-8600, smithfarm.com.

Hirshhorn: "Strange Bodies: Figurative Works From the Hirshhorn Collection," through early 2010. "Ways of Seeing: Giuseppe and Giovanna Panza," through Jan. 7. "Directions: Terence Gower, Public Spirit" features plans for Hirshhorn's art-based town in the wilderness of Canada, through March 22. 7th Street & Independence Avenue SW; 202-633-1000, hirshhorn.org.

STAGE | ALICE ANEW



KENTON YEAGER

MIRROR, MIRROR: Everyone knows the story of "Alice in Wonderland" and the petite heroine's adventures through the looking glass, but Round House Theatre Bethesda's "Alice" is a reimagining of Lewis Carroll's tale. Using an entirely new script adapted by director Mary Hall Surface, the play is great for kids and recommended for ages 6 and older.

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LATE SHOW 21 and up only
Doors 8 pm
Show 9 pm

WED The legwarmers
12/31 DC's Biggest New Year's Retro Dance Party

JANUARY

FRI 1/2 Tim Reynolds and TR3
The Charlottesville AllStars
Rosslyn Mountain Boys
and The Nighthawks

TUE 1/6 Gregg Allman
plus Honeytribe feat. Devon Allman

THU 1/8 Camper Van Beethoven
25th Anniversary Show

SAT 1/10 THE PIETASTERS
plus Buster Brown & The Get Down

SUN 1/11 The People's Republic of Komedy presents THE CRACKED UP COMEDY TOUR

FRI 1/16 THE SMITHREENS

TUE 1/20 DONNA THE BUFFALO
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Adv. Tix on Sale THE CURIOUS CASE OF BENJAMIN

Adv. Tix on Sale MARLEY AND ME

YES MAN (PG-13) ★ (1015 1115 1245 200 315 445) 630 715 750

SEVEN POUNDS (PG-13) ★ (1000 100 400) 700

THE TALE OF DESPEREAUX (G) ★ (1100 115 345) 615

THE DAY THE EARTH STOOD STILL (PG-13) (1015 1100 1200 1245 145 245 330 530) 615

OC & DA: THE DAY THE EARTH STOOD STILL (PG-13) (430 PM) 715 PM

NOTHING LIKE THE HOLIDAYS (PG-13) (1145 215 445) 715

AUSTRALIA (PG-13) (1230 PM 430 PM) 800 PM

FOUR CHRISTMAS (PG-13) (1045 100 315) 600

TWILIGHT (PG-13) (1000 125 330) 645

BOLT 3D -\$2.50 CHARGE FOR 3D (PG) ★ (1030 130 415) 645

QUANTUM OF SOLACE (PG-13) (1130 215 500) 745

MADAGASCAR 2: ESCAPE TO AFRICA (PG) (1245 PM 255 PM 510) PM

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YES MAN (PG-13) ★ (1000 1115 1230 145 300 440 530) 710

SEVEN POUNDS (PG-13) ★ (1030 130 430) 730

THE TALE OF DESPEREAUX (G) ★ (1010 1130 1220 200 250 420 510) 640 740

THE DAY THE EARTH STOOD STILL (PG-13) (1120 1210 120 210 310 400 540) 720

OC & DA: THE DAY THE EARTH STOOD STILL (PG-13) (1050 AM) 630 PM

NOTHING LIKE THE HOLIDAYS (PG-13) (1100 150 410) 700

FOUR CHRISTMAS (PG-13) (1200 230 500) 750

TWILIGHT (PG-13) (1000 125 330) 650

BOLT (PG) (1020 100 340) 645

QUANTUM OF SOLACE (PG-13) (1150 240 520) 800

MADAGASCAR 2: ESCAPE TO AFRICA (PG) (1040 110 350) 620

UA SNOWDEN SQ STADIUM 14

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Adv. Tix on Sale BEDTIME STORIES

Adv. Tix on Sale THE CURIOUS CASE OF BENJAMIN

Adv. Tix on Sale MARLEY AND ME

YES MAN (PG-13) ★ (1220 120 250 420 520) 700 800

THE TALE OF DESPEREAUX (G) ★ (1200 130 230 345 450) 630 725

SEVEN POUNDS (PG-13) ★ (100 PM 400 PM) 715 PM

THE DAY THE EARTH STOOD STILL (PG-13) (1205 140 240 410 500 530) 640 735

SLUMDOG MILLIONAIRE (R) - ID REQ'D (150 PM 440 PM) 750 PM

CADILLAC RECORDS (R) - ID REQ'D (1230 305 535) 800

OC: FOUR CHRISTMAS (PG-13) (1240 PM) 740 PM

AUSTRALIA (PG-13) (200 PM)

FOUR CHRISTMAS (PG-13) (300 PM 510 PM)

TWILIGHT (PG-13) (110 PM 355 PM) 730 PM

BOLT (PG) (1155 220 445) 705

QUANTUM OF SOLACE (PG-13) (650 PM)

MADAGASCAR 2: ESCAPE TO AFRICA (PG) (1210 PM 225 PM 435 PM)

MAJESTIC STADIUM 20

900 Ellsworth Dr. Silver Spring, MD 240-393-4826

Adv. Tix on Sale BEDTIME STORIES

Adv. Tix on Sale THE CURIOUS CASE OF BENJAMIN

Adv. Tix on Sale MARLEY AND ME

SEVEN POUNDS (PG-13) ★ (1035 1130 1240 130 215) 330 430 545 700 730

YES MAN (PG-13) ★ (1045 1140 1230 110 205 300 340 440 525) 605 705 800

THE TALE OF DESPEREAUX (G) ★ (1040 1145 1255 155 310 405 530) 615 745

OC & DA: THE DAY THE EARTH STOOD STILL (PG-13) (120 PM) 700 PM

THE DAY THE EARTH STOOD STILL (PG-13) (1050 1250) 340 415 620

NOTHING LIKE THE HOLIDAYS (PG-13) (1015 AM) 530 745 PM

CADILLAC RECORDS (R) - ID REQ'D (1155 235) 510 750

AUSTRALIA (PG-13) (140 PM)

FOUR CHRISTMAS (PG-13) (1045 100 315 530) 755

TWILIGHT (PG-13) (1025 110 350) 760 840

BOLT 3D -\$2.50 CHARGE FOR 3D (PG) ★ (1130 200 445) 655

QUANTUM OF SOLACE (PG-13) (1150 225 435) 730

MADAGASCAR 2: ESCAPE TO AFRICA (PG) (1245 PM 255 PM 510) PM

GALLERY PLACE STADIUM 14

701 Seventh St NW 800-FANDANGO 1721#

Adv. Tix on Sale BEDTIME STORIES

Adv. Tix on Sale THE CURIOUS CASE OF BENJAMIN

Adv. Tix on Sale MARLEY AND ME

SEVEN POUNDS (PG-13) ★ (1020 1100 1230 130 215) 330 430 545 700 730

YES MAN (PG-13) ★ (1030 1145 115 220) 400 500 600 740

THE TALE OF DESPEREAUX (G) ★ (1000 1210 225) 450 710

OC & DA: THE DAY THE EARTH STOOD STILL (PG-13) (120 PM) 700 PM

THE DAY THE EARTH STOOD STILL (PG-13) (1050 1250) 340 415 620

NOTHING LIKE THE HOLIDAYS (PG-13) (1015 AM) 530 745 PM

CADILLAC RECORDS (R) - ID REQ'D (1155 235) 510 750

AUSTRALIA (PG-13) (140 PM)

FOUR CHRISTMAS (PG-13) (1045 100 315 530) 755

TWILIGHT (PG-13) (1025 110 350) 760 840

BOLT 3D -\$2.50 CHARGE FOR 3D (PG) ★ (1130 200 445) 655

QUANTUM OF SOLACE (PG-13) (1150 225 435) 730

MADAGASCAR 2: ESCAPE TO AFRICA (PG) (1245 PM 255 PM 510) PM

Historical Society of Washington:

"March on Washington: 45th Anniversary," "Photographs of the Civil Rights Movement." 801 K St. NW; 202-383-1850.

Honfleur Gallery:

"Fragile," work by John K. Lawson that was damaged by the floods of Hurricane Katrina or made from materials salvaged from wreckage left in the storm's aftermath, through Jan. 2. 1241 Good Hope Road SE; 202-889-5000.

International Spy Museum: Permanent displays of wristwatch cameras, poison gas guns, a World War II Enigma cipher machine and other coding machines, disguises, etc. 800 F St. NW; 202-393-7798, spymuseum.org.

Irvine Contemporary: "Aspect:Ratio I," small-format paintings, through Jan 10. 1412 14th St. NW; 202-332-8767, irvine-contemporary.com.

Kathleen Ewing Gallery: "Birth Place," photographs by Rob McDonald, through Jan. 31. "Egg & Nest," photographs by Rosamond Purcell, through Jan. 31. "Over: The American Landscape at the Tipping Point," photographs by Alex

COUNTRYSIDE STADIUM 20

45980 Regal Plaza 800-FANDANGO 394#

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SEVEN POUNDS (PG-13) ★ (1035 1230 120 330 420) 640 730

YES MAN (PG-13) ★ (1010 1100 115 220 300 400 450 540) 630 720

THE TALE OF DESPEREAUX (G) ★ (1040 1140 120 310 430 460) 620 710

OC & DA: THE DAY THE EARTH STOOD STILL (PG-13) (140 PM) 740 PM

THE DAY THE EARTH STOOD STILL (PG-13) (1015 1110 1130 1210 1250 320 350 440 520) 610 650

NOTHING LIKE THE HOLIDAYS (PG-13) (1050 115 115 205 300 400 500 635) 635 735

SLUMDOG MILLIONAIRE (R) - ID REQ'D (1020 110 115 220 340 450 500) 620 725

CADILLAC RECORDS (R) - ID REQ'D (1215 200 300) 615 765

FOUR CHRISTMAS (PG-13) (1000 1220 240 500) 700 750

AUSTRALIA (PG-13) (1200 200 410) 710 PM

TWILIGHT (PG-13) (1235 215 345 475) 705 755

BOLT (PG) (1200 220 450) 720 750

QUANTUM OF SOLACE (PG-13) (1200 240 520) 750 750

MADAGASCAR 2: ESCAPE TO AFRICA (PG) (1135 AM 150 445) 645 745

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SEVEN POUNDS (PG-13) ★ (1045 1145 115 215 345 445) 600 700

THE TALE OF DESPEREAUX (G) ★ (1000 1115 1215 130 230 345 445) 600 700

OC & DA: THE DAY THE EARTH STOOD STILL (PG-13) (1010 120 320 420 520) 610 710

TWILIGHT (PG-13) (1015 150 440) 740 740

BOLT (PG) (1200 220 450) 720 750

QUANTUM OF SOLACE (PG-13) (1200 240 520) 750 750

MADAGASCAR 2: ESCAPE TO AFRICA (PG) (1110 120 340 550) 600 700

RW & DA: SEVEN POUNDS (PG-13) ★ (1010 145 430) 715 715

RW & DA: NOTHING LIKE THE HOLIDAYS (PG-13) (1010 120 2

The Scene

MacLean, through Jan. 31. 1767 P St. NW; 202-328-0955.

Koshland Science Museum: "Global Warming Facts & Our Future," "Infectious Disease: Evolving Challenges to Human Health," "Wonders of Science," ongoing. 6th & E streets NW; 202-334-1201, koshland-science-museum.org.

Library of Congress: "Creating the United States," American treasures including a draft of the Declaration of Independence, ongoing. 101 1st St. SE; 202-707-4604. loc.gov.

STAGE | DO YOU BELIEVE?



AMANDA WILLIAMS/PHOTOGRAPHY

HAVE A LITTLE FAITH: The good folks at the experimental Landless Theatre aren't too picky about who they offend—or who they make laugh—so you might as well just give in to the jolly, berserk fun of "A Very Merry Unauthorized Children's Scientology Pageant." It's so absurd it can't possibly be true... or is it so absurd it must be true? Hm...

National Academy of Sciences: "Tornadoes: Paintings by John Brosio," through Jan. 19. 2100 C St. NW; 202-334-2436, nasonline.org.

National Aquarium: Celebrate America's aquatic treasures in this beautiful refurbished underground space, ongoing. 14th Street & Constitution Avenue NW; 202-482-2825, nationalaquarium.com.

National Building Museum: "Green Community" explores communities united by a quest for ecological sustainability, through Oct. 25, 2009. "Cityscapes Revealed: Highlights From the Collection," "Investigating Where We Live," "Washington, Symbol and City," ongoing. 401 F St.

Continued on E17



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IMAX THE DAY THE EARTH STOOD STILL: THE IMAX EXPERIENCE (PG13)
1:10, 4:00, 7:00, 9:45

DIGITAL 3D

BOLT IN DISNEY DIGITAL 3D (PG) 1:05, 3:25, 5:45, 8:05, 10:25

SEVEN POUNDS (PG13) ✓ 1:00, 1:45, 3:00, 4:10, 5:00, 6:10, 7:10, 8:00, 9:20, 10:10

THE TALE OF DESPEREAUX (G) 12:50, 1:50, 3:30, 4:20, 5:55, 7:30, 8:30, 10:05

YES MAN (PG13) ✓ 12:00, 1:55, 2:45, 4:30, 5:30, 7:20, 8:10, 10:00

THE DAY THE EARTH STOOD STILL (PG13) 2:00, 4:40, 7:40, 10:30

THE DAY THE EARTH STOOD STILL (PG13) ☎ 12:20, 3:20, 6:20, 9:00

PUNISHER: WAR ZONE (R) 1:25, 4:45, 7:45, 10:20

AUSTRALIA (PG13) 12:05, 4:05, 7:35

FOUR CHRISTMASES (PG13) 12:30, 1:30, 2:50, 4:05, 5:05, 6:30, 7:25, 9:10, 9:55

TRANSPORTER 3 (PG13) 7:50, 10:20

BOLT (PG) 1:40, 4:15

TWILIGHT (PG13) 1:15, 4:25, 7:15, 10:15

QUANTUM OF SOLACE (PG13) 1:20, 4:00, 6:40, 9:30

MADAGASCAR: ESCAPE 2 AFRICA (PG) 12:55, 3:10, 5:35

ROLE MODELS (R) 7:05, 9:40

AMC SELECT

SLUMDOG MILLIONAIRE (R) 1:35, 4:35, 7:35, 10:30

NOTHING LIKE THE HOLIDAYS (PG13) 2:15, 4:55, 7:55, 10:35

CADILLAC RECORDS (R) 2:10, 4:30, 7:45, 10:25

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IMAX THE DAY THE EARTH STOOD STILL: THE IMAX EXPERIENCE (PG13)

10:45, 1:30, 4:15, 7:00, 9:45

DIGITAL 3D

BOLT IN DISNEY DIGITAL 3D (PG) 11:50, 2:10, 4:45, 7:15, 9:50

SEVEN POUNDS (PG13) 10:00, 11:00, 1:00, 2:00, 4:10, 5:10, 7:10, 8:10, 10:10

THE TALE OF DESPEREAUX (G) 11:15, 1:40, 4:20, 6:50, 9:15

YES MAN (PG13) 11:10, 1:50, 4:30, 7:30, 10:10

THE DAY THE EARTH STOOD STILL (PG13) ☎ 11:40, 2:30, 5:15, 8:00

AUSTRALIA (PG13) 6:45

FOUR CHRISTMASES (PG13) 11:45, 2:15, 4:40, 7:20, 9:40

TRANSPORTER 3 (PG13) 11:20, 2:50, 10:15

TWILIGHT (PG13) 10:50, 1:45, 4:50, 7:55

QUANTUM OF SOLACE (PG13) 10:05, 12:40, 3:10, 5:10, 5:40, 8:15

MADAGASCAR: ESCAPE 2 AFRICA (PG) 10:30, 1:15, 3:45

ROLE MODELS (R) 2:45, 7:50

AMC SELECT

NOTHING LIKE THE HOLIDAYS (PG13) 11:30, 2:20, 5:00, 7:35, 10:00

CADILLAC RECORDS (R) 10:10, 12:50, 3:30, 6:00, 8:40

LOEWS GEORGETOWN 14

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202-342-6441

DIGITAL 3D

BOLT IN DISNEY DIGITAL 3D (PG) 12:35, 2:50, 5:20, 7:50, 10:15

SEVEN POUNDS (PG13) ✓ 1:05, 2:15, 4:10, 5:15, 7:10, 8:15, 10:10

YES MAN (PG13) ✓ 1:40, 4:20, 7:00, 9:45

THE DAY THE EARTH STOOD STILL (PG13) 12:45, 2:05, 3:20, 4:40, 5:55, 7:15, 8:30, 9:55

AUSTRALIA (PG13) 3:15, 6:50

FOUR CHRISTMASES (PG13) 12:30, 2:50, 5:10, 7:30, 10:00

TWILIGHT (PG13) 2:00, 4:55, 7:40, 10:35

QUANTUM OF SOLACE (PG13) 4:45, 7:20, 9:55

ROLE MODELS (R) 10:30 PM

AMC SELECT

FROST/NIXON (R) 12:50, 1:55, 3:35, 4:50, 6:30, 7:45, 9:25, 10:40

FROST/NIXON (R) ☎ 12:50, 2:30, 3:30, 5:05, 6:45, 8:00, 9:40

SLUMDOG MILLIONAIRE (R) 1:00, 2:20, 3:30, 5:05, 6:45, 8:00, 9:40

NOTHING LIKE THE HOLIDAYS (PG13) 12:00, 2:20

AMC POTOMAC MILLS 18
2700 Potomac Mills Circle, Ste 886
703-998-4262

IMAX THE DAY THE EARTH STOOD STILL: THE IMAX EXPERIENCE (PG13)
1:40, 4:20, 7:00, 9:45

DIGITAL 3D

BOLT IN DISNEY DIGITAL 3D (PG) 12:05, 2:30, 5:00, 7:25, 10:05

SEVEN POUNDS (PG13) ✓ 12:20, 1:00, 3:20, 4:10, 6:20, 7:10, 9:30, 10:10

THE TALE OF DESPEREAUX (G) ✓ 12:30, 3:00, 5:30, 8:00, 10:20

YES MAN (PG13) ✓ 1:10, 3:50, 4:30, 6:40, 7:20, 9:20, 10:10

THE DAY THE EARTH STOOD STILL (PG13) 12:50, 3:30, 6:15, 9:00

THE DAY THE EARTH STOOD STILL (PG13) ☎ 2:10, 4:45, 7:15, 9:45

AUSTRALIA (PG13) 6:10, 9:40

FOUR CHRISTMASES (PG13) 12:25, 2:50, 5:10, 6:45, 7:30, 9:10

TRANSPORTER 3 (PG13) 12:10, 2:35, 5:05, 7:50, 10:15

BOLT (PG) 1:35, 4:15

TWILIGHT (PG13) 1:30, 4:25, 7:15, 10:10

QUANTUM OF SOLACE (PG13) 2:15, 4:50, 7:40, 10:25

MADAGASCAR: ESCAPE 2 AFRICA (PG) 9:05, 12:30, 4:00, 7:20, 9:30

ROLE MODELS (R) 10:15, 12:15

AMC SELECT

SLUMDOG MILLIONAIRE (R) 1:05, 1:45, 4:45, 7:45

THE TALE OF DESPEREAUX (G) 2:15, 4:45, 7:30, 10:00

YES MAN (PG13) 3:10, 4:20, 7:00, 9:40

AUSTRALIA (PG13) ☎ 3:10, 6:50, 10:20

FOUR CHRISTMASES (PG13) 2:00, 4:30, 7:20, 9:50

BOLT (PG) 1:40, 4:10, 7:10, 9:30

QUANTUM OF SOLACE (PG13) 2:30, 5:00, 8:00, 10:30

AMC SELECT

SLUMDOG MILLIONAIRE (R) 1:05, 1:50, 4:40, 7:30, 10:25

NOTHING LIKE THE HOLIDAYS (PG13) 1:05, 12:25, 2:50, 5:25, 7:55, 10:20

SOUL MEN (R) 3:15, 8:00, 10:20

AMC SELECT

NOTHING LIKE THE HOLIDAYS (PG13) 7:40, 10:10

CADILLAC RECORDS (R) 12:30, 3:00, 5:30, 8:00, 10:25

LOEWS SHIRLINGTON 7

2772 South Randolph
703-671-0910 801

THE BOY IN THE STRIPED PAJAMAS (PG13) 2:20, 7:40

I'VE LOVED YOU SO LONG (PG13) 1:35, 4:10, 7:10

AMC SELECT

SLUMDOG MILLIONAIRE (R) 1:45, 2:45, 4:30, 5:25, 7:20, 8:00

MILK (R) 1:30, 2:30, 4:15, 5:15, 7:00, 8:00

TWILIGHT (PG13) 2:00, 4:55, 7:40, 10:35

QUANTUM OF SOLACE (PG13) 9:35, 12:10, 2:40, 5:05, 7:35, 10:10

MADAGASCAR: ESCAPE 2 AFRICA (PG) 10:25, 12:40, 2:55, 4:05

ROLE MODELS (R) 7:35, 9:55

AMC SELECT

NOTHING LIKE THE HOLIDAYS (PG13) 7:40, 10:10

CADILLAC RECORDS (R) 12:30, 3:00, 5:30, 8:00, 10:25

LOEWS UPTOWN 1

3426 Connecticut Avenue N.W.
1-800-FANDANGO #713

THE DAY THE EARTH STOOD STILL (PG13) 2:30, 5:10, 7:40

AMC SELECT

FROST/NIXON (R) 12:50, 1:55, 3:35, 4:50, 6:30, 7:45, 9:25, 10:40

FROST/NIXON (R) ☎ 12:50, 2:30, 3:30, 5:05, 6:45, 8:00, 9:40

SLUMDOG MILLIONAIRE (R) 1:00, 2:20, 3:30, 5:05, 6:45, 8:00, 9:40

NOTHING LIKE THE HOLIDAYS (PG13) 12:00, 2:20

LOEWS WHITE FLINT 5

North Bethesda
1-800-FANDANGO #741

SEVEN POUNDS (PG13) 2:00, 4:45, 7:35

YES MAN (PG13) 2:15, 4:50, 7:15

THE DAY THE EARTH STOOD STILL (PG13) 2:05, 4:35, 7:40

AUSTRALIA (PG13) 2:30, 6:40

FOUR CHRISTMASES (PG13) 2:10, 4:20, 7:30

ROLE MODELS (R)</b

Foodie Resolutions

How to cook better, eat better and live better in 2009

Another year, another set of New Year's resolutions to make, forget and feel guilty about neglecting 12 months from now. But times being what they are (an economy with a broken back, a trans fat scare at code red and adorable Pixar robots piquing our environmental conscience) people may feel inclined to give that dusty list of do's and don'ts another go.

COOKING ON A BUDGET

DEAN GOLD from Cleveland Park's Dino knows something about cooking to save green without cutting corners: He's his own boss, food buyer and executive chef. Here's his advice for making pocketbook-friendly meals.

→ **DON'T THROW AWAY ANYTHING:** If you're making a recipe that calls for peeling onions, carrots and trimming other vegetables, use the trims to make a little stock. The stock will make another meal or add flavor to a soup or sauce.

→ **BUY CHEAPER CUTS OF MEAT:** Pork



ISTOCKPHOTO

EAT LOCALLY, PAY FRUGALLY: Cooking with the good stuff — whether fresh, local or artisanal — doesn't have to cost more.

is much more flavorful than tenderloin. Buy it and braise it.

→ **USE GOOD STUFF IN YOUR COOKING:** Gold uses balsamico, which retails for about \$25 a bottle, but only a tablespoon or so. It will make for a much more flavorful dish, and the remaining vinegar lasts for three years.

→ **BUY WHOLE BIRDS AND USE THE**

VARIOUS CUTS FOR VARIOUS DISHES: One whole duck, says Gold, which costs only a little more

than what you would pay for two breasts, yields three appetizers, a duck sauce or stew and the meal of the duck breasts. Plus you get a real prize: duck fat for sautéing starchy vegetables.

→ **BUY WHAT'S IN SEASON:** Sure, you

can get berries right now but they're from Chile and cost an arm and a leg and they don't taste like local.

MEGAN O'NEILL helped launch Tree-Hugger.com in 2004. Also the co-author of "Ready, Set, Green: Eight Weeks to Modern Eco-Living," she knows a thing or two about green cooking and grocery shopping.

→ **EAT LESS MEAT:** If you're new to going green or if you feel like upping the ante, cut back on the amount of meat in your diet. You don't have to eliminate it entirely — or eat grass-fed meat.

→ **BE A LOCAVORE:** Whenever possible, buy local fruits and vegetables, even beer. Reduce the number of miles it takes for your food to get to your plate.

→ **EAT FEWER PROCESSED FOODS:** The amount of water needed to make even one glass of store-bought juice is alarming.

→ **EATING GREEN IS SHOPPING GREEN:** Avoid products packaged in styrofoam or cellophane. One simple thing to do is bring your own bags to the grocery store.

→ **SHOP AT FARMERS MARKETS:** The number of farmers markets has gone up exponentially. People care more about what they eat and how it gets to their plate. Going green is like going on a diet; you do it slowly. You have a more sustainable task on your hands.

DR. ARTHUR FRANK is medical director George Washington University's Weight Management Program. Here are a few of his recommendations for planning, and eating, your next meal:

We're living in a world of ease and convenience. Preparing our own food gives us control over it. If you want ice cream, go out to get it. If it's not at home at the ready, it's not going to be eaten as often and it'll be a treat. **CHRISTOPHER CORREA**

Eating Around

CAN WE STOP CALLING THEM 'FREEDOM FRIES' NOW?

Yes, Oui Can

Celebrate President Obama's inauguration in style at Ici Urban Bistro, where you'll be treated to toasts and toast.

The drinks will flow and the dancing will commence on the eve of the regime change, and from Jan. 18 through 20, the joint will also serve a hot breakfast at the trendy Le Bar from 11:30 p.m. to 2 a.m. Try the omelets or morning sandwiches if you're feeling like a

fast break for breakfast.

Ici's Franco-focused menu also offers some clever spins on traditional American classics like cheeseburgers and grilled New York strip steaks. (cc)

Ici Urban Bistro 806 15th St. NW; 202-730-8700, iciurbanbistro.com. (McPherson Square)

FISHY KIDS' STUFF

Take the Little Picky Ones To PassionFish for a Dip

Fish sticks be damned! PassionFish in Reston is offering a seafaring menu that will satisfy and not merely placate the little tykes.

The joint's first kid's selection also provides epicurious youngsters a chance to find their sea legs (and offers parents an economical alternative to dining out elsewhere). Entrees are around \$6; desserts



COURTESY SIMONE SEZ

PassionFish with its cool interior is also a cool place to take the wee ones.

and sides cost \$3 each.

The "Beach Bucket" presents fish, shrimp or chicken in a jaunty nautical blue and white tin bucket; Fish tacos are fresh and crisp; and the "beginner" sushi roll features cucumber, avocado and fresh crabmeat spiced with soy sauce. (cc) *PassionFish, Reston Town Center, 11960 Democracy Drive, Reston; 703-230-3474, passionfishreston.com.*

JUST LIKE MOM SAID IT DID Procrastination Pays Off

Attention all last-minute Christmas diners: Chef Dennis Marron from the Grille at Morrison House will prepare a Feast of Seven Fishes dinner on Thursday night.

The six-course seafood dinner (\$90) served with an amuse-bouche of Kumamoto oyster with juniper air and apple caviar.

Try the fluke with preserved lemon, capers and marinated calamari or a pan-seared day boat scallop with apple leather and bacon espuma.

Dessert features a layered chocolate cake called "Twas the Night Before Christmas," as well as holiday staples such as gingerbread, eggnog and real, old-fashioned sugarplums.

On Friday, a \$50 three-course brunch menu with complimentary champagne is also available. So Happy Christmas to all, and to all a good bite! (cc)

The Grille at Morrison House 116 S. Alfred St., Alexandria; 866-834-6628, morrisonhouse.com.

➤ WHAT'S EATING YOU?

Please send press releases, photos and food to dining@readexpress.com.

The Scene

Continued from E15

NW: 202-272-2448, nbm.org.

National Gallery of Art, East Building: "George de Forest Brush: The Indian Paintings," through Jan. 4. "Small French Paintings," permanent exhibit. "Pompeii and the Roman Villa: Art and Culture Around the Bay of Naples," through March 22. 4th Street & Constitution Avenue NW; 202-737-4215, nga.gov. "Jan Lievens: A Dutch Master Rediscovered," opens Sun., through Jan. 11. West Building: "Oceans, Rivers, and Skies: Ansel Adams, Robert Adams, and Alfred Stieglitz," black and white landscape photographs, through March 15. 4th Street & Constitution Avenue NW; 202-737-4215, nga.gov.

National Gallery of Art, West Building: "Crosscurrents: American and European Masterpieces From the Permanent Collection," some of the Gallery's most significant paintings, through Jan. 1. "Jan Lievens: A Dutch Master Rediscovered," one of Rembrandt's contemporaries gets his moment in the spotlight, through Jan. 11. "Oceans, Rivers and Skies: Ansel Adams, Robert Adams and Alfred Stieglitz," 21 works by the landscape photographers presented in chronological order, through March 15. Permanent exhibit, collection of European and American paintings, sculpture and decorative arts from the 13th through the 19th centuries and an outdoor sculpture garden, 6th Street & Constitution Avenue NW; 202-737-4215, nga.gov.

National Geographic: "Odysseys

and Photographs — Masters From the National Geographic Archives," through Jan. 4. "Whales | Tohoto," stories, skeletons and interactive objects, through Jan. 18. 1145 17th St. NW; 202-857-7588, nationalgeographic.com/museum.

National Museum of American History: The newly light-filled space contains an array of ongoing exhibitions, including "The Star-Spangled Banner: The Flag That Inspired the National Anthem," "Science in American Life," "Bon Appetit! Julia Child's Kitchen at the Smithsonian," the Declaration of Independence and many more, 14th Street & Constitution Avenue NW; 202-633-1000, americanhistory.si.edu.

National Museum of Crime & Punishment: Permanent exhibit, various displays on the history of crime, crime-fighting and punishment in the United States, 575 7th St. NW; 202-393-1099.

National Museum of Health and Medicine: Permanent exhibit, displays about medicine, including the world's largest and

FUNKY SOUL | MID-WINTER CHILL



ALL THE WAY LIVE: Best known for their energetic live shows, New York's Soulive is not a band to miss. The funky soul trio comes to 9:30 Club on Sunday, so come down from your gingerbread high for the butt-motivating rhythms of the songs on "No Place Like Soul," released on Memphis' legendary Stax Records.

most representative collection of microscopes, human bodies and skeletons, 6900 Georgia Ave. NW, Building 54; 202-782-2200, nlm.nih.gov/hmd/medtour/nmhm.html.

National Museum of the American Indian: "Fritz Scholder: Indian/Not Indian," a retrospective of the contemporary artist's paintings, bronze sculptures and lithographs, through Aug. 16. Displays about the history and culture of American Indians, 4th Street and Independence Avenue SW; 202-633-1000, nmai.si.edu.

National Museum of Natural History: "Dig It! The Secrets of Soil," the dirt on dirt, through Jan. 3. Many ongoing and permanent displays, 10th Street & Constitution Avenue NW; 202-633-1000, mnhs.si.edu.

National Museum of Women in the Arts: "Role Models: Feminine Identity in Contemporary American Photography," through Jan. 25. "Mary Cassatt: Friends and Family," through Jan. 25. "Beyond Tradition: The Pueblo Pottery of Tammy Garcia," through Feb. 3. 1250 New York

Ave. NW; 202-783-5000, nmwa.org.

National Portrait Gallery: "Portraiture Now: Feature Photography," through Sept. 27. "One Life: The Mask of Lincoln," through July 5. "Four Indian Kings," through Jan. 25. "Women of Our Time: 20th Century Photographs," through Feb. 1. "Ballyhoo! Posters as Portraiture," through Feb. 8. "Tokens of Affection and Regard: Photographic Jewelry and Its Makers," through June 21. 8th & F streets NW; 202-633-1000, npg.si.edu.

Newseum: A popular museum of news tracing the history of journalism, with interactive exhibitions in 14 galleries, 15 theaters and two broadcast studios. "G-Men and Journalists," ongoing. 555 Pennsylvania Ave. NW; 888-639-7386, newseum.org.

Phillips Collection: "Christo and Jeanne-Claude: Over the River, a Work in Progress," the artistic team plans to suspend their fabric art over the Arkansas River, through Jan. 25. 1600 21st St. NW; 202-387-2151, philipscollection.org.

Project 4 Gallery: "Accumulation," the painterly, organic ceramics of Margaret Boozer, through Jan. 17. 1353 U St. NW; 202-232-4340, project4gallery.com.

Randall Scott Gallery: Quasi-Painting, works by some of the region's most talented and imaginative artists, including Julie Simon, Patrick McDonough and Sarah Wilmer, through Jan. 10. 1326 14th St. NW; 202-332-0806, randallscottgallery.com.

Renwick Gallery: "Lino Tagliapietra in Retrospect: A Modern Renaissance in Glass," through Jan. 11. American crafts and decorative arts, ongoing. 17th Street & Pennsylvania Avenue NW; 202-633-1000, americanart.si.edu/renwick/index.cfm.

Reyes + Davis Independent Exhibitions: "All Artists Exhibition," Work by Janis Goodman, Pepa Leon, Judy Jasinsky, Barbara Liotta and Johanna Mueller, through Dec. 30. 923 F St. NW; 202-255-5050.

S. Dillon Ripley Center: "Road to Freedom," photographs of the civil rights

movement, through March 9. 1100 Jefferson Drive SW; 202-633-1000, si.edu/ripley.

Smithsonian American Art Museum: "Earth and Sky: Photographs by Barbara Bosworth," through Sun. "Georgia O'Keeffe & Ansel Adams: Natural Affinities," through Jan. 4. "The Honor of Your Company Is Requested: President Lincoln's Inaugural Ball," through Jan. 18. 8th & F streets NW; 202-633-1000, americanart.si.edu. "Road to Freedom: Photographs of the Civil Rights Movement, 1956-1968," through March 9. 1100 Jefferson Drive SW; 202-633-4751, nmaahc.si.edu.

Stanford in Washington Art Gallery: "Politics, etcetera," through Jan. 31. 2661 Connecticut Ave. NW; 202-332-6235.

Strathmore Fine Art Gallery: "75th Annual International Exhibition of Fine Art in Miniature," through Jan. 3. "Nebiur Arellano: Timeless Filigree," works based on Incan carvings. "Works by Alice Hui & Jane Brashares," craftworks such as

Continued on E19

The Washington Post washingtonpost.com

MEGA Jobs

SUNDAY, JANUARY 11!

Also featured in "Express" from January 12-16 and in "El Tiempo Latino" on January 16th.

**LOOKING FOR A NEW JOB?
YOUR JOB SEARCH IS ALMOST OVER!**

Get The Washington Post MEGA Jobs edition on Sunday, January 11th. It's our biggest Jobs section of the year with **THOUSANDS** of new job listings from the area's **most prominent companies!**

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JAZZ JAM | LET IT SYNCOPATE



CAROL PRATT

HOLIDAY HARMONY: Santa's not the only one working this season. All-Star Christmas Day Jazz Jam, now in its 11th year at the Kennedy Center, features legendary vibraphonist Chuck Redd, above, pianist Robert Redd, drummer Lenny Robinson, trumpeter Tom Williams, bassist James King and vocalist Delores Williams.

The Scene

Continued from E17

homemade papers, pots, vases and sculptures, through Jan. 3. 10701 Rockville Pike, Bethesda; 301-581-5200, strathmore.org.

Studio Gallery: "One Big, One Small," works focusing on perspectives featuring more than 30 artists, through Jan. 3. 2108 R St. NW; 202-232-8734, studio gallerydc.com.

Target Gallery: "5x5x(5): Small Works" tiny paintings, sculptures, ceramics and jewelry, through Jan. 11. 105 N. Union St., Alexandria; 703-838-4565, torpedofactory.org.

Textile Museum: "Timbuktu to Tibet: Rugs and Textiles of the Hajji Babas," explores rugs and textiles in diverse cultures, through March 8. 2320 S St. NW; 202-667-0441, textilemuseum.org.

Touchstone Gallery: "Small Works: Small Prices," artworks less than \$500, through Jan. 3. 406 7th St. NW; 202-347-2787, touchstonegallery.com.

U.S. Botanic Garden: "Windows to Wonderland," miniature trains run through models of Santa's Village and other holiday-themed locales, through Jan. 4. Permanent exhibitions of more than 4,000 plants and a tropical rain forest, ongoing.

100 Maryland Ave. SW; 202-225-8333, usbg.org.

U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum: "A Dangerous Lie: Protocols of the Elders of Zion," "Genocide Emergency: Darfur, Sudan," "Remember the Children: Daniel's Story," "Witness to History: Documenting the Path of American Liberators," ongoing. Permanent exhibition of artifacts, photographs and oral histories. 100 Raoul Wallenberg Place (15th Street) SW; 202-488-0400, ushmm.org.

LAST CHANCE Washington Print-makers Gallery: "Journey Along the Underground Railroad," recent Etchings by Joseph Holston, through Sun. 1732 Connecticut Ave. NW; 202-332-7757.

Washington Project for the Arts: "When Absence Becomes Presence," explores time-based art such as music, film and readings, through Dec. 23. 2023 Massachusetts Ave. NW; 202-234-7103, wpadc.org.

Zenith Gallery: "Zenith for Real," grounded but whimsical works by Drew Ernst, Robert Jackson and Donna McCullough, through Jan. 4. 413 7th St. NW; 202-783-2963, zenithgallery.com.

Stage

Many stages are dark on Dec. 25. Please call before heading out.

LAST CHANCE Alice: Round House

Theatre reinterprets Lewis Carroll's "Alice's Adventures in Wonderland," through Sun., \$25-\$60. Round House Theatre Bethesda, 4545 East West Highway, Bethesda; 240-644-1100, roundhousetheatre.org.

Altar Boyz: The story of a Christian boy band that seriously rocks, through Jan. 3, \$25-\$70. Bethesda Theatre, 7719 Wisconsin Ave., Bethesda; 301-657-7827, bethesdatheatre.org.

An American Century Christmas: A revue of memorable Christmas moments, through Jan. 4, \$23-\$29. Gunston Arts Center Theater II, 2700 S. Lang St., Arlington; 703-998-4555, americancentury.org.

The Butterfingers Angel, Mary & Joseph, Herod the Nut & the Slaughter of 12 Hit Carols in a Pear Tree: Lee Mikeska Gardner directs a

story that combines traditional music, contemporary language, children, animals, a drum-playing Herod and a tree, through Jan. 4, \$15-\$30. Rep Stage, Howard Community College, Howard Community College, 10901 Little Patuxent Parkway, Columbia; 410-772-4900, repstage.org.

LAST CHANCE A Christmas Carol: Ford's Theatre's annual production moves to new spot, through Sun., \$33-\$65. Lansburgh Theatre, 450 7th St. NW; 202-

547-1122, 877-487-8849, fords.org.

Frosty the Snowman: Frosty comes to life and makes mischief, through Jan. 4, \$15, 12 and younger \$12. Adventure Theatre, Glen Echo Park, 7300 MacArthur Blvd., Glen Echo; 301-320-5331, adventuretheatre.org/frosty.html.

Grey Gardens: The cult documentary about Big and Little Edie Beale — impoverished and mentally unstable relatives of Jacqueline Bouvier Kennedy — becomes a musical, through Jan. 11, \$49-\$69. Studio Theatre, 1501 14th St. NW; 202-332-3300, studiotheatre.org.

Gutenberg! The Musical!: Song and dance about the invention of movable type, through Jan. 4, \$25. Landless Theatre Company, 2438 18th St. NW; landlesstheatrecompany.org.

Legally Blonde — The Musical: A singing-and-dancing adaptation of the 2001 film tells the story of Elle Woods as she goes from the sorority house to Harvard Law School, through Jan. 11, \$25-\$95. Kennedy Center, 2700 F St. NW; 202-467-4600, kennedy-center.org.

Les Miserables: The long-running and crowd-pleasing musical hits Signature's stage in a spare but epic production by Eric Schaeffer, through Feb. 22, \$65-\$87. Signature Theatre, 4200 Campbell Ave., Arlington; 703-820-9771, signature-

theatre.org.

WEEKENDS ONLY Miss Nelson Is Missing!: An elementary school class

searches for its missing teacher, through Jan. 4, \$10-\$21. Imagination Stage, 4908 Auburn Ave., Bethesda; 301-280-1660, imaginationstage.org.

Next to Normal: The musical story of a woman whose family must face her mental illness, through Jan. 18, \$61-\$66. Arena Stage Crystal City, 1800 S. Bell St., Arlington; 202-248-3300, arenastage.org.

LAST CHANCE The Nutcracker: The Washington Ballet presents the seasonal production with a lavish, D.C. theme, through Sun. Warner Theatre, 513 13th St. NW; 202-783-4000, warnertheatre.com.

The Penguin Story: A puppet show adapted from an old Bulgarian children's play about a group of mischievous penguins who set out to visit Santa Claus. For ages 3 and older, through Jan. 25, \$12 in advance, \$15 at door. Classika Theater, 4041 Campbell Ave., Arlington; 800-494-8497, classika.org.

Peter Pan: The Musical: A high-flying adventure for kids, through Jan. 4, \$25-\$43. Olney Theatre Center for the Arts, 2001 Olney-Sandy Spring Road, Olney, Md.; 301-924-3400, olneytheatre.org.

LAST CHANCE Seasonal Disorder: Holiday-themed improv, through Sat., \$5-\$15. Source Theater, 1835 14th St. NW; 202-204-7770, washingtonimprovtheatre.com.

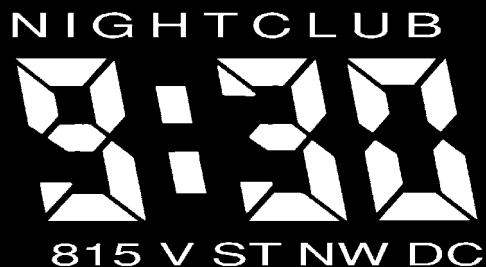
Sholom Aleichem: Laughter Through Tears: Theodore Bikel stars in this one-man musical featuring classic Yiddish music, through Jan. 11, \$15-\$55. Theater J, 1529 16th St. NW; 800-494-8497, washingtondcjcc.org.

Too Much Light Makes the Baby Go Blind: The Chicago-based Neo-Futurists, back to perform 30 short, Dadaist plays in 60 minutes, through Jan. 4. Woolly Mammoth Theatre, 641 D St. NW; \$30; 202-393-3939, woollymammoth.net.

Twelfth Night: One of Shakespeare's most popular comedies is rife with the enduring themes of farce, including separated twins, cross-dressing and mistaken identity, through Jan. 4. Sidney Harman Hall, 610 F St. NW; 202-547-1122.

A Very Merry Unauthorized Children's Scientology Pageant: A Tom Cruise (and his friends) Christmas, through Jan. 4, \$25. Landless Theatre Company, 2438 18th St. NW; landlesstheatrecompany.org.

West Side Story: The out-of-town tryout of a musical favorite, this time authenticated with the use of some Spanish language, through Jan. 17. National Theatre, 1321 Pennsylvania Ave. NW; 202-628-6161.



THIS WEEK'S SHOWS

Hip Hop Harry

from *Discovery Kids! Matinee Show!* 1:30pm Doors.F 26

State Radio w/ Lionize 8pm Doors.F 26

The Dance Party

w/ New Rock Church of Fire & Crash Boom BangSa 27

Soulive w/ DJ RekhaSu 28

DECEMBER

SPEND NEW YEAR'S EVE WITH

Robert Randolph and the Family Band

w/ Justin Jones and the Driving RainW 31

Complimentary Champagne Toast at Midnight!

JANUARY

WU-TANG CLAN

feat. Raekwon • Ghostface Killah • Inspectah Deck • RZA • GZA •
Masta Killa with Cappadonna and DJ Mathematics

JANUARY 1

Femi Kuti and the Positive ForceF 9

The Speaks • *Farewell Show!* w/ Honor By AugustSa 10

Strunz and Farah *This is a seated show.*W 14

Badfish, A Tribute to Sublime w/ Special Guests: Scotty Don't . Th 15

BLOWOFF

feat. the DJ SOUNDS of **BOB MOULD & RICHARD MOREL** 21+ to enter. . Sa 17

Tea Leaf Green w/ The Hackensaw BoysSa 24

Reel Big Fish w/ Streetlight Manifesto & Tip the VanSu 25

FEBRUARY

THE PRETENDERS

FEBRUARY 2

98.7 WMZQ PRESENTS

Little Big Town w/ Zac Brown BandW 4

James Morrison w/ Erin McCarleyTh 5

Big Head Todd and the MonstersF 6

Cat PowerSu 8

TICKETS.COM: 800-955-5566 • www.930.com

SPEND NEW YEAR'S EVE WITH

Robert Randolph and the Family Band

w/ Justin Jones
and the Driving Rain

DECEMBER 31

*Complimentary Champagne Toast
at Midnight!*

*Bring donations for our Charity Raffle for a
chance to win great New Year's prizes!*

FINAL WEEK!

ANNUAL ROCKIN' RAFFLE!

GENEROSITY REWARDED.

Bring Canned Goods
Clean (New or Used) Clothes
or a \$5 monetary donation
to the 9:30 Club from Dec. 1st-31st
for a chance to win
**FREE TICKETS FOR EVERY
9:30 CLUB SHOW IN 2009.**

**Drawing held on stage on New Year's Eve
and posted January 1st on 930.com**

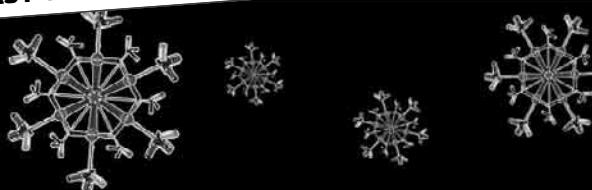
Contest also includes drawings for weekly prize packs
with CDs, shirts, gift cards, and more!

Donations will be made to:
Bread for the City
SOME (So Others Might Eat)
House of Ruth
Capitol Area Food Bank

Limit 10 raffle tickets per person per day.
Go to www.930.com for more info.



LAST-MINUTE GIFTS!



THIS SEASON, STAY COOL WITH HOT SHOWS & SWAG.

9:30 GIFT CARDS
Good for shows & bar tabs!

9:30 CLUBWEAR

Including our newest selection of infants onesies & kids T's.

DON'T BE A FLAKE. BUY 9:30 CLUB GIFTS

**AVAILABLE AT OUR BOX OFFICE!
DEC. 24 HOURS: 12pm-5pm**